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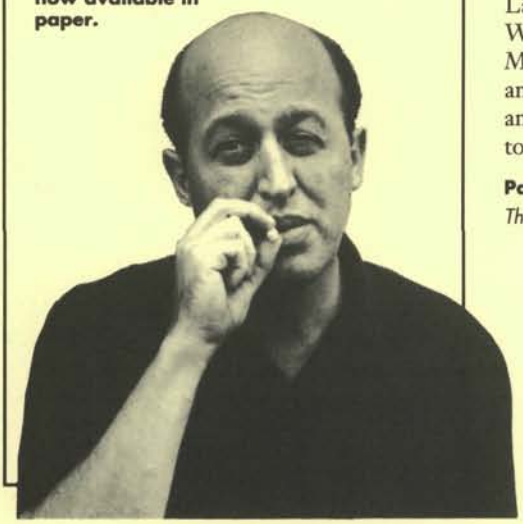

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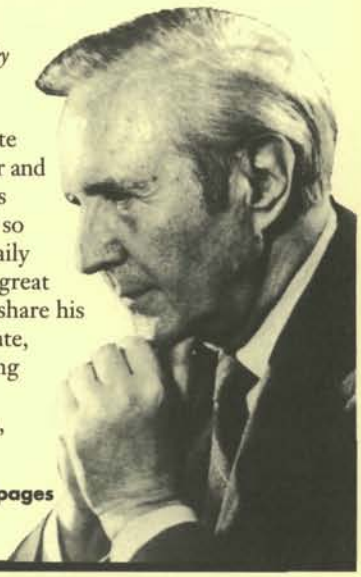

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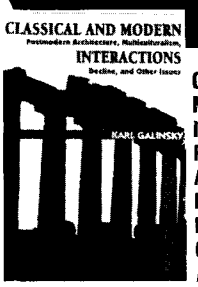

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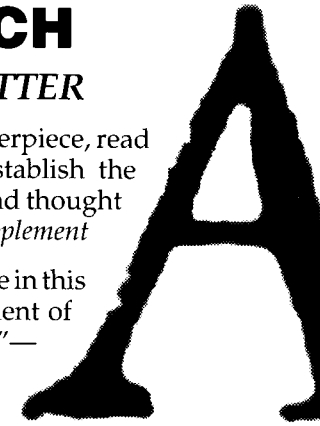

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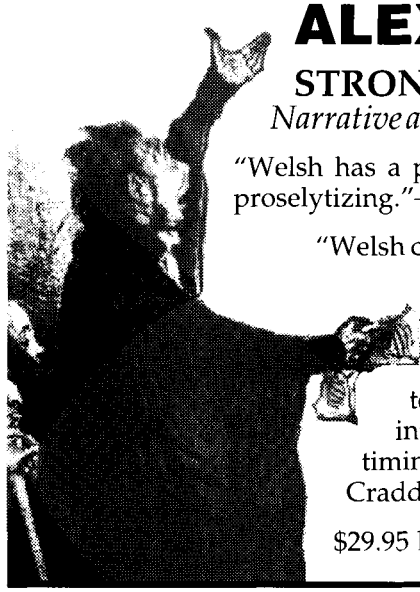

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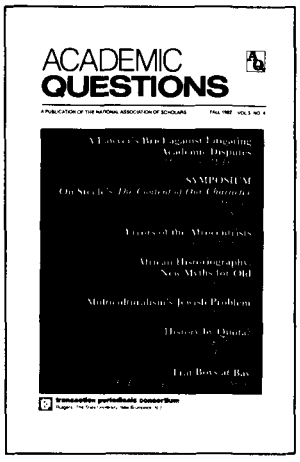

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Life and Letters

Such Good Taste

ARISTIDES

Whenever I find myself in the West—in such states as New Mexico, Colorado, or California—I feel a distinct if ineffable sense of discomfort, no matter how glorious the day or how splendid the surrounding scenery. Only recently have I understood why this is so: the American West is about life lived outdoors, where, as it turns out, not one of my fantasies takes place—and in none of these fantasies, it ought to be added, am I wearing jeans. All this makes me distinctly an anti-western kind of guy.

The place that makes me least comfortable is that indubitably most beautiful of American cities, San Francisco, where not only have I never come close to losing my heart but, on more than one occasion, I have been in serious danger of blowing my cool. It is the putative good taste of San Franciscans that gets to me; more precisely, it is the tyrannous, relentless, in-your-face insistence on good taste pervading the place that makes me want to end each meal I eat in that city with a resounding belch and a general attack on the importance of spectacular views and sun-dried tomatoes.

It's less the actual good taste of San Franciscans I mind than the pride in good taste everywhere on display in that city. Pride in one's good taste, someone ought to inform the head of San Francisco's Chamber of Commerce, is, prima facie, bad taste. The possession of good taste, like that of sexual prowess and other natural talents, is better demonstrated than discussed. If you've got it, you should feel under an obligation not to talk about it. But then if you truly have it, my guess is, it would never occur to you to talk about it. Not everyone in San Francisco does talk about it, but there is something in the general atmosphere one encounters there that suggests that San Franciscans, above all other Americans, truly know how to live. Since all this talk about good taste and the central part it plays in the good life seems to have spread to Berkeley and Palo Alto, and to the Bay Area generally, I have come to call it—until now only to myself—Bayarrhea, standing for tiresome babble about taste marked by the underlying assumption that one's own taste is superior to everyone else's.

Perhaps the problem here is that this confidence of San Franciscans in their good taste matches my confidence in my own rather better taste. My sense is that most of us do take a certain pride in having good taste. If we can't take pride in it in all realms, we feel we have the sense to know what in life it is important to have good taste about. All of us are a bit vulnerable on this score. La Rochefoucauld, taking his always-safe low view of humankind, wrote: "Our pride is more offended by attacks on our taste than on our opinions." I would take this a small step further. Most of us would rather be caught in an act of serious bad judgment than in one of singular bad taste. How else account for the fact that "He was a man of sound judgment with occasional lapses in taste" sounds, somehow, worse than "He was a man of impeccable taste with occasional lapses in judgment"? Bad judgment, unless it is habitual, seems a mistake of the moment; bad taste, an ingrained condition for which there is no known cure.

Taste is the choosing and discriminating sense. For taste to go into operation, a fairly complex society has to exist, one offering a vast buffet of aesthetic and utilitarian objects as well as social possibilities and points of view. Some even hold that humanity was happier, even morally better, before taste set

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in and became as important as it has in human transactions. Taste, in this view, desiccates, over-refines, smothers the instincts; it castrates the noble savage, sterilizes Aphrodite. In the novels of E. M. Forster, for example, a strong concern about good taste is a sure sign that one is a dry and dreary person, hopelessly out of touch with all the true wellsprings of life.

Yet there can scarcely be any overestimating the importance taste plays in some lives. I have known people who would have sooner been—and usually were—wrong about the Soviet Union than drive a car they thought vulgar. Politics is only politics, but for people of militant good taste, serving iceberg lettuce at a dinner party is, let us face it, a significant mistake. I hope I will be forgiven when I say that I can't take much more talk about lettuce. (Has the first upper-middle-class child named Arugula been born yet?) I could also live quite happily without ever again hearing the name Ralph Lauren. (When I see someone wearing clothes displaying his odious Polo designer logo or name, I exclaim to myself, as Art Carney used to do on the old "Honeymooners" television show, "Yo ho ho, Ralphy boy.") I could probably get by nicely, too, without seeing another advertisement for eight-thousand-dollar wristwatches. The same goes for Mont Blanc fountain pens, expensive, leaky little buggers that they are. Show me a man with a Rolex watch, a Mont Blanc in the (probably ink-stained) pocket of his Ralph Lauren shirt, and I'll show you a man besotted with, inundated by, led by the nose because of a concern for good taste—or, to speak more plainly, a concern for slavish and expensive conformity.

Another name for such items is *objets du goût*. *Objets du goût* include those things costing much more than they are worth, standing for much more than they ought, and bringing more extraneous pleasure than their owners deserve. The world seems very crowded just now with *objets du goût*—objects really intended to show that one has expensive and lovely taste, as opposed to objects of genuine art or utility, or those truly uniting elegance and utility. We now have in America entire towns that are essentially *objets du goût*: Mystic, Connecticut; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Aspen, Colorado. Thousands of kids walk the streets heavily mantled with names that are themselves little more than *objets du goût*: Kendall, Brooke, Scott, Ashley, Tiffany, Britanny, Page. One of the claims to fame of the philandering husband in Nora Ephron's novel *Heartburn* is that, as a boy, he went out with the first Jewish girl named Kimberly.

When confronted by such thick-fingered attempts at good taste in too-great profusion, I find I get a bit flippy, that condition of extreme agitation leading on to incipient madness. When the flippiness is upon me, my environment needs to be carefully controlled. At such times you would do well not to take me to a restaurant where the menu offers tuna tartar with seaweed, a terrine of goat cheese, beets, and pomegranates, and Armagnac ice cream mildly spiced with just a touch of tarragon, for my inclination, presented with such grub, is to want to slip out to the kitchen and prettily julienne the chef. Upper-middle-class shopping malls have a similarly darkening effect on me. Set me down in certain buildings on north Michigan Avenue in Chicago or on Rodeo Drive in Los Angeles and I find it is all I can do to keep from calling for the tumbril and the People's Razor, as the guillotine was known during the French Revolution; unbeknownst to my fellow consumers, amongst whom I walk, I become a perfect little Mme Defarge, minus the knitting, a virulent Communist long after every Red has pulled out of the Finland Station.

What is it about these little temples of good taste—be they restaurants or tony shops—that get me so worked up? It isn't good old-fashioned class hatred. The social class of the people frequenting such places is roughly my own: college-educated, middle-class, still panting fairly heavily with aspiration. Not so different than they, I am a card-carrying member of American Express, a man of Visa (if not of vision). Even though my own toy box is by now well enough stocked, I have not lost my interest in acquisition. Do I not carry a costly Pelikan fountain pen in the pockets of my too-numerous shirts? Do I not on occasion wear shoes made in a boot-shaped country? Where do I get off criticizing other people on this score? Really, I think to myself, people driving in German cars shouldn't throw phones.

I grew up in a home where the question of taste, good or bad, was never discussed. My mother loved clothes, had a dramatic flair in

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wearing them and a nice sense of what was right for her. My father wished only to avoid outlandishness, which he did, but otherwise was never bothered by questions of taste. As a boy, I don't remember hearing the word "taste" from either of my parents. The only object of clothing I was ever criticized for wearing was a jacket I was much pleased to own in high school that had the name "Kool-Vent Awnings" written on the back. The reason I was so pleased to own it was that, in those days in Chicago, this company sponsored a number of locally successful softball and basketball teams, and by wearing it I hoped that I would be taken by strangers for a more talented athlete than I was. My father took an immediate dislike to that jacket, asking me why I wished to go around as a walking advertisement for someone else's business. (The age of designer logos, from Louis Vuitton to Nike, was still far in the future.) Why not wear sandwich boards, he asked, and earn a few bucks while I was at it?

For the rest—furniture, cars, and other appurtenances—our family taste in no way exceeded or otherwise deviated from our social class. We had not advanced to that stage of culture where there was an interest in the antique; in all ways, the new was considered better than the old. An inherent social conservatism combined with a Depression-learned financial caution ruled in our family, so we never owned cars grander than we could afford, or belonged to country clubs, or did anything on a lavish, and hence particularly vulgar, scale. Because neither of my parents went to college, the level of sophistication where questions of taste begin to strike the nervous and, sometimes, comic note was never reached. Ours was not a family that, at dinner, sat around discussing the relative merits of Williams and Amherst; none of its members could have told you where, or even what, Williams and Amherst were. If you had mentioned William and Mary, we would have thought you were referring to the McDermotts, who lived upstairs. Actually, we never called it dinner; we called it supper.

None of this, be it understood, kept me from performing quite efficiently in school as a perfect snob of a kind. Mine was not a cruel snobbery—that is, I took no joy in putting people down or otherwise lording it over anyone. Mine was instead a more limited and entirely upward-looking snobbery. I simply wanted to be in what seemed to me the better circles of kids in the schools I attended. In practice this never proved to be a very serious problem, and I easily enough achieved what I desired. The exercise of taste, along with careful touches of salesmanship, had not a little to do with it.

Taste, in this context, meant never being too different, except perhaps to excel ever so slightly within the recognized pattern of conformity. This operated in the realms both of thought and appearance, and what one was required to conform to was not very difficult to figure out. In high school, good taste implied group taste, which in clothes for boys meant Levi's or the khaki-colored trousers we then called washpants, solid-colored (when possible, cashmere) sweaters worn over white tee-shirts; letter sweaters (I had won a letter in tennis) or club jackets (my high school was divided into scores of social-athletic clubs) were also considered good form as were the white Converse gym shoes known as Chuck Taylor All Stars.

Apart from the nerdish lack of style of the boys we used to call "science bores"—a rumpled look demonstrating a total disregard for clothes—one other style of dress was possible during my high school days, and this was a somewhat belated and more casual version of zoot-suitism. Bought on Halsted Street, near Maxwell Street, at a haberdashery called Smokey Joe's, these duds featured such nicely overstated items as electric blue or rust-colored pants with outer stitching on the seams, rayon shirts with high Mr. B. (after the singer Billy Eckstine) collars, and boxcar loafers—thin suede belts and long key chains optional.

I should like to report that my innate good taste steered me entirely clear of such ridiculous clothes, but I remember once buying, not at Smokey Joe's but at a men's shop in the Loop, a then quite radically pink shirt with a collar pin and a slender black knit tie (known at the time, I believe, as a "slim Jim") with two pink stripes running horizontally near its bottom. I am further embarrassed by the recollection of going shopping with my mother, at the age of fifteen, at a store named Baskin's in Evanston for what was then described as "a one-button-roll suit," in powder blue flannel, and my mother being told by the salesman that he thought such a suit distinctly a mistake

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for her son. The salesman was absolutely correct, of course, which didn't prevent me from hating him. Fortunately, I didn't get the suit.

I say fortunately because that one-button-roll, powder blue suit would have been sufficient to keep me out of the fraternity I was asked to join during my freshman year at the University of Illinois. (A friend, I was told, was blackballed by the fraternity of his choice at Michigan for wearing white sweat socks during rush week.) This fraternity was very clothes conscious; its haberdasher of choice was Brooks Brothers; and deviations, which is to say lapses in taste, were not happily tolerated. Not long after moving in, I remember a particularly twerpy member coming round to check every new pledge's tie rack and feeling distinctly relieved for having had the good sense not to bring my slim Jim along.

The University of Illinois may have been in the Big Ten, but this fraternity's sartorial model was clearly Ivy League. (Or "Ivory League," as I have always thought it, after someone I know reported to me having been caught years ago as a graduate student at Princeton with a young woman in his boardinghouse room. This was against the rules and caused his landlady, an immigrant, to chastise him, saying she was greatly disappointed in him, having till now thought him "a nice boy, clean and cut from the Ivory League.") Ivy League snobbery in these matters was in itself bad enough—it was, after all, an imitation of English snobbery—but to encounter this at a reduced level in the Middle West was more than ridiculous; it was snobbery based on a snobbery itself based on a foreign snobbery, an imitation of an imitation. Pathetic, really.

I dropped out of the fraternity and soon departed the University of Illinois for the University of Chicago, where such snobbery as existed was exclusively of an intellectual kind. But my brief experience as a fraternity man taught me that I did not live comfortably under too strong a tyranny of taste. No doubt this experience has much to do with my edginess when I nowadays come up against little tyrants of taste in everyday life. All this might suggest a clear victory of good sense (mine) over social conformity (other people's). But I rather doubt that it does. I still buy a goodly portion of my clothes at Brooks Brothers (now owned by Marks and Spencer, the English discount kings), and now, nearly forty years later, I suspect I continue to look like a greatly aged boy, clean and cut from the Ivory League. Sadder still to report, some years ago I told a woman I know that I was once in a fraternity, and she responded by saying she thought she could guess which one it was. Damn if she didn't get it exactly right. Some marks, apparently, do not erase.

What makes taste so complex a phenomenon is that it is entwined, sometimes it seems inextricably, with style and fashion and social class and snobbery, and, at certain points, it even touches on morality. People for whom questions of taste loom very large in their own lives are likely to find a strong moral component in taste. I myself do not, except where taste lapses into snobbery of a kind meant to hurt others. But experience teaches—or at least ought to—that a person can have the most exquisite taste and still be a miserable creep, while another person can exist outside the realm of taste and be quite angelic. So many geniuses—Mozart, Beethoven, Balzac, Dostoyevsky, Dickens—were men of enormous bad taste, leading one to believe that genius is itself beyond taste, good or bad. It is the rest of us, those who are without genius, who are left to attend carefully to matters of taste.

Taste is a word that is subject to the most wiggly usage in the minds and mouths of some people and is used with impressive precision by others. To begin with, it is unclear whether we are to some extent born with taste or develop it as we go along in life. John Loring, the chief buyer for Tiffany's and hence one of the leading arbiters of contemporary taste, holds rather Rousseauesque views on the subject. He believes that "bad taste is the perversions of taste which people acquire," which implies that people are born with good taste. "Bad taste," adds Mr. Loring, "is received opinion." The more traditional view is that we acquire taste as we achieve culture, through education and self-cultivation.

Benjamin Jowett, in writing a recommendation for H. W. Fowler, who failed to receive a First at Oxford, noted: "He is quite a gentleman in manner and feeling and has good sense and good taste." By good taste I assume that Jowett didn't mean Fowler wore Calvin Klein underwear and the shoes of Salvatore Ferragamo. I assume he meant it was some-

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thing that Fowler, through rigorous application, had acquired. Pressed, I should say that, when Jowett praised Fowler's good taste, what he had in mind was his sense of suitability. Good sense and an understanding of what is suitable are certainly the qualities that Fowler would later reveal, to the highest power, in *Modern English Usage,* a book that is perhaps as much about taste as it is about correctness.

"The essence of taste is suitability," wrote Edith Wharton in "French Ways and Their Meanings." But how does one know what is suitable? We know, the answer is, in our bones. Here we get very near the matter of sensibility, one of the trickiest words in the language, which for me has been best formulated, if not quite defined, by Jacques Barzun, who writes:

> Taste implies a judgment of some kind. Sensibility doesn't judge, it receives. Or it fails to. Sensibility equals the number and fineness of your nerve ends. It's the obverse of one's limitations.

Proust's friend, the composer Reynaldo Hahn, in his book *On Singers and Singing,* defines taste as "a wide-ranging instinct, a sure and rapid perception of even the smallest matters, a particular sensitivity of the spirit which prompts us to reject spontaneously whatever would appear as a blemish in a given context, would alter or weaken a feeling, distort a meaning, accentuate an error, run counter to the purposes of art." That seems to me very good, except that it defines taste as the search for and elimination of flaws—which is to say, it defines it negatively. Hazlitt, in "Thoughts on Taste," went at things the other way round. He held that "genius is the power of producing excellence: taste is the power of perceiving the excellence thus produced in its several sorts and degrees, with all their force, refinement, distinctions, and connections." He felt that "fine taste consists in sympathy, not in antipathy; and the rejection of what is bad is only to be accounted a virtue when it implies a preference and attachment to what is better." Hazlitt believed that our true taste was revealed by our enthusiasms.

That one's taste is best revealed by one's enthusiasms seems very intelligent, too, except that I am not at all sure I can define my taste by my own enthusiasms. I not only have a fairly strong inconsistency, in my view a happy inconsistency, of taste—I am one of those people who can watch a professional football game in the afternoon and then go off to a chamber music concert in the evening—but in so many realms my taste is rather boringly conventional. In recent years, the four works of visual art that really caused the earth to shake under me have all been sculptural: Praxiteles' Hermes with the Infant Dionysus, which I saw at Olympia in Greece; the two very different Davids, Michelangelo's and Donatello's, both in Florence; and, finally and illogically, Sir George Gilbert Scott's Albert Memorial in London, which most people consider *the* monument to Victorian bad taste, but which blew me away. I prefer Degas and Matisse above all modern painters, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Darius Milhaud and Ravel (regretting that he wrote *Bolero)* above all modern composers. I tend to prefer the comic over the tragic, the light over the heavy, Montaigne and Pascal over Hegel and Nietzsche, the classical over the romantic, the Apollonian over the Dionysian.

Many of my tastes are generational, which is not very interesting, except that the generation isn't always mine. I seem to have fallen just the other, calmer side of the 1960s, that great divider of Americans, in taste as in much else. This often causes me to share tastes with people much older than I and sometimes to feel distant from people only slightly younger. I was recently with a man nearly thirty years older, who said that he could never consider sex a trivial act. I feel that way, too. I am deaf to all rock music after the Beatles and think that the songs of Gershwin, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Johnny Mercer, and other songwriters of that generation unlikely ever to be surpassed. I like to wear neckties. I like the very idea of Fred Astaire and of Duke Ellington. I like sophisticated women; and Myrna Loy is my notion of a dish, to use a word that probably gives me away. I am a sucker for what I take to be urbane and elegant. Much of my sense of what constitutes urbanity and elegance derives from the 1920s, a decade I wasn't alive to witness.

Nor does my taste always seem coherent. Take humor. I find Henny Youngman very funny. But I also love Max Beerbohm, who, among other knockout remarks, once, consid-

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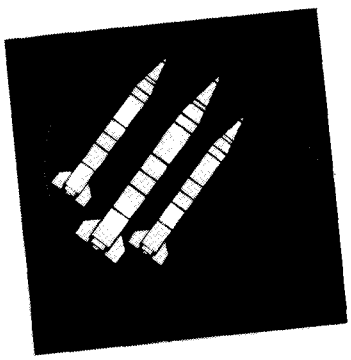

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ering Freud, said: "They were a tense and peculiar family, the Oedipuses." W. C. Fields can also do the job for me. I am not above caving in at slapstick: a Buster Keaton walk into a wall, say, or an Oliver Hardy fall through a floor. But then I also think Henry James a very funny man. Men and women, I find, often show strong differences in taste in humor. Most women do not find W. C. Fields all that funny or H. L. Mencken, either; and I have yet to meet a woman who laughs at the comedian Rodney Dangerfield, which I do. Perhaps it is such dumpy men, which most men eventually become, whom women do not find funny. Then again a certain category of humor is about eschewing good taste, deliberately, which women of natural refinement are not easily able to do.

Examples of what I consider bad taste are not difficult to find. Not allowing men in prison to smoke, which until recently was the law in Vermont, struck me as a piece of genuine bad taste, puritan division. Calling too much attention to oneself through one's clothes is another form of bad taste; Ben Hecht once called overdressing the only art we've developed in America. Marrying more than three times feels to me a display of bad judgment lapsing into bad taste owing to a man or woman simply not knowing when to call it quits. No shortage of bad taste in ideas. To continue to call oneself a Marxist in our day, after all the nightmares Marxism has caused in the world, seems to me in extremely poor taste. Some people have broader tastes than others, but to have a taste for everything—and I have met professors who never met ideas they didn't like—appears to me bad taste of a kind that renders one something close to an idiot.

In the article "Taste" in the old *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*—and I have a distinct taste for older over newer reference works—the art historian Meyer Schapiro remarks that "taste is identified with good taste, and good taste with the taste of the upper class." He goes on to claim that "good taste becomes the aesthetics of conduct, the aptitude for manners and politeness, the knowledge of formal practices, the arts and choices most favorable to the enjoyment of the conditions of upper-class life." Even as I copy that out, I sense its irrelevance. While once it was true, it is true no longer. Edith Wharton could acknowledge the philistinism of her parents, but she went on to allow that they were immensely well spoken, had a usefully settled code of conduct, and ate wonderfully well. An upper class of this kind simply no longer exists. We have the very rich, we have people at the summit of with-it-ry, we may even have power elites, but none of these suggest anything like the stability of taste that Edith Wharton and, before her, Henry James found in American life. Quite the reverse. Nowadays the richer, more powerful, more with-it one is, the more chaotic one's taste is likely to be. Such people made the fortunes of such dreadful painters as Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol, and Julian Schnabel. Apart from the knowledge that money talks—it makes, I fear, rather a squawking noise—they have no more confidence in their own views on taste than anyone else, maybe even a little less.

My own guess is that many of our clues about what constitutes good taste come from an upper class that no longer exists, if not from one that existed most elegantly in the imagination. American novelists of the 1920s and 1930s, not least among them such Irish-Americans as F. Scott Fitzgerald, John O'Hara, and, later, Mary McCarthy, wrote novels that spoke to a longing for upper-class standards of elegant good taste. It is because F. Scott Fitzgerald in particular was able to infuse so much style into his fantasies of upper-class good taste that so many kids named Scott and Nicole (never, alas, poor Zelda) walk the streets in our own day.

The combination of style and taste is not always so easily disentangled. Style tends to be free, taste restricted; style, by its very nature, independent; taste, by its nature, conventional. To have taste implies a strong sense of tradition; to have style is to think, act, feel rather like no one before you. (Much avant-garde style is intended to affront good taste.) Taste of a certain kind can be bought or, through training, acquired—Elsie de Wolfe claimed that the interior decorator's job was to introduce new money to old furniture; style appears to be something with which one is born. When from time to time people with style appear, they change taste, sometimes radically, more often ever so slightly. The late Audrey Hepburn, for example, made it possible for a woman to be skinny and still seem sexy.

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At the same time that we admire style, we worry about taste. Or at least some of us do. Meyer Schapiro writes that "good taste is essentially conservative, for while it is poor taste to be behind the time, it is still worse to be ahead [of the time]." I have never for a moment been in danger of being ahead of my time. When I was younger I felt a moderate urge to be at least abreast of my time, but less and less do I feel this as I grow older. Coco Chanel, savvy though she was about so much else, was, I believe, wrong when she said, "*La mode est toujours jolie.*" I have seen too many past styles that, when they are done, are far from *jolie*; *hideuse* comes closer to describing them. To restrict myself to men's styles, consider the bell-bottom trousers of the 1960s, the long sideburns of the 1970s, the stone-washing and other perversions of denim of the 1980s. I am fairly confident that, before long, the oversized men's double-breasted suits of the 1990s will join this cavalcade of comic fashion, so that grandchildren will years from now laugh at photographs of you in your $1,000 Italian suit. ("Hey, Giorgio, you made the coat too long.")

I wish I were quite as impervious to fashion as that last paragraph suggests. Feeling happily well out of it, a touch old-fashioned by deliberation, a paid mocker of my own time, I nonetheless occasionally still feel myself gripped at the throat by the fashion of the day. I put on an old single-breasted raincoat I own, and it feels, somehow, skimpy. My blue blazer feels oddly narrow in the shoulders. The wool plaid shirt I have always fancied has a collar that nowadays seems too long. Why should I care? I am not in the permanent Easter parade. I am not in the skirt chase. I don't even yearn to be the sixth best-dressed man in the geology department. Yet, I find, I do care. I stop wearing my old raincoat. I buy a new, looser-fitting blue blazer. I have a tailor shorten the collar of my old shirt for roughly what the shirt originally cost new.

I seem to have slipped from taste to fashion. Quentin Bell, in his little book on Ruskin, writes that "fashion is the grand motor force of taste." Certainly this is true to the extent that one of the few certain things about taste is that it changes. Chroniclers of taste have even charted a cycle through which taste in the modern age passes. "Indeed," writes Stephen Bayley, in a book titled *Taste: The Secret Meaning of Things*, "the cycle of taste—from modishness to disfavor and then to camp revival—is a familiar one upon which the spurious dynamics of the fashion industry depend." I feel rather sorry for people who have allowed themselves to become hostages to these changes—who become breathless in the race to stay ahead of their time. But perhaps I should save my pity, for the race probably makes them very happy, and another way of living may not, in any case, be available to them. In "Psychology of Fashion," Georg Simmel holds that there are "classes and individuals who demand constant change . . . [and who] find in fashion something that keeps pace with their own soul-movements."

Yet, I sometimes wonder, why does my own soul move so differently? Why am I not among the people who seem able to change styles, adopt new fashions, turn in their taste so regularly and so easily? Why is it that I myself prefer to remain in the outer purlieus of fashion, far from the chic and madding crowd, content to indulge in my own mildly out-of-it tastes? Is this owing to my temperament, upbringing, reason, propensity for moral judgment? I think perhaps it is because I have for a long while conceived of my life as a small work of art—a minor sculpture, perhaps, or a miniature portrait—while people who can change their tastes from week to week think of their lives as, perhaps, a television series or the nightly news. However ineptly I have shaped this work of art I strive to make of my life, I cannot suddenly recast it, switch to all black clothes, pierce an ear, go about in cowboy boots. I grow old, I grow old, I shall wear my trousers with a one-and-a-half-inch cuff and a slight break at the ankle.

For all that taste changes, runs in cycles, is manipulated by designers and advertisers, and is often little more than a co-efficient of social class, for all that it can be the agent of snobbery, an artificial way of separating people from one another, the product merely of the cultural environment in which one grew up—for all this, I believe that taste really exists. I believe, moreover, that there truly is such a thing as good taste whose roots lie in something much deeper and more mysterious than fashion. A friend who edits an intellectual magazine once returned a manuscript to an academic author, saying that he would be pleased to publish it if the author would

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remove the manuscript's heavily jargonized language. The author wrote back to say that he would be pleased to do so, since he assumed that the use of jargon was nothing more than a matter of taste. "Yes," said my friend, "it is a matter of taste: good taste versus bad taste." I agree completely. I agree, too, with Edith Wharton, who wrote of taste: "Divest the word of its prim and priggish implications, and see how it expresses the mysterious demand of the eye and mind for symmetry, harmony and order."

When good taste is removed, one feels the loss rather dramatically. A strong case in point is the changes that have taken place in recent years at *The New Yorker* magazine since the removal from the magazine's editorship of William Shawn. Much in the old *New Yorker*, under Shawn's editorship, was imperfect. I frequently disagreed with the magazine's politics, found some of its comedy only worked to tighten the lines in my natural frown, felt myself turn blue with boredom at many of its three- and four-part articles. But the one thing that could not be faulted during William Shawn's editorship was the magazine's inherent good taste.

Shawn did not permit four-letter words or other profanities in *The New Yorker*, my guess is, because he knew that such locutions were being used everywhere else and he knew that there was neither distinction nor courage in having them in his magazine. Perhaps for the same reason, he did not publish stories that described or talked about fornication, plain or fancy. And so when a John Cheever or a John Updike story appeared in a magazine other than *The New Yorker*, you could almost predict what it was about. You could rely on Shawn's regard for the integrity of words generally, so that under his editorship you would never find the word *intriguing* as if it were a synonym for *interesting* or *fascinating*; discover *presently* misused; or see so bloated a word as *prestigious* used at all.

Some might argue that Shawn did these things out of prudery or because he was a language crank. I don't think this was so. I think that William Shawn insisted on these points because of his intrinsic good taste. And nowhere did Shawn pass the test of good taste better, in my view, than in the unsigned obituaries he used to write on the deaths of longtime employees of the magazine. So perfect was his touch, avoiding sentimentality and overstatement, drawing out exactly the detail that revealed character and made plain the significance in these lives that, in reading these obituaries, I used to feel a touch of something like envy for the person who had died for his having been so perfectly appreciated. These obituaries were matchless exercises in good taste.

When Shawn himself died, no one on *The New Yorker* could be found who could write anything like an obituary of the same quality for him, which, sad in itself, suggests the loss of something serious. Much of the complaint one now hears about that magazine since Shawn was dismissed from its editorship, I believe, has much to do with the loss of good taste that he brought to the magazine. Read the magazine today, with its unbuttoned and often sloppy language, its edge of political meanness, the childish obviousness of its attempts to outrage, and one comes to yearn for the quiet good taste that could once be counted on in a magazine one has been reading for decades. The result is as if a fine and reliable old friend, a little dull perhaps but always with beautiful manners, has, in his senility, discovered a novelty store and suddenly taken to pulling various obscene objects out of his pockets: rubber vomit, inflatable sex organs, plaster of paris dog droppings. None of it, shall we say, in the best of taste.

Good taste may not be as important as original thought, wit, or even charm, but life can seem more desperately competitive, haunted by snobbery, much less gracious without it. Under endemic bad taste, life takes on a decline-and-fall quality that is not easily shaken off; while being in the presence of unpretentious good taste allows one to feel—allows me at any rate to feel—both contented and calmly uplifted. Nicely muted but genuine good taste makes the world seem a pleasant place where you can relax and where you may even have a shot at becoming that apparently most difficult of all things to be—exactly what you are, your true self.

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The Bill of Rights in Its Context

OSCAR HANDLIN

As its bicentennial commemoration recedes, the American Bill of Rights remains as puzzling as ever—more puzzling than ever.

Such celebrations no doubt satisfy some deep need for a periodic reminder of the advance of time and of continuity with the past—saints' days, birthdays, and anniversaries of longer duration—centennial or bicentennial, even quincentennial. The advance of knowledge, however, is rarely among the rewards of such celebrations, which more often than not serve to advance some particular cause of the celebrants.

The United States has enjoyed a good clutch of such occasions since 1976, when memorials of the American Revolution spread their share of ignorance; and a big one came up in 1992, when it became time to consider whether Columbus discovered, vanquished, or despoiled the New World. And for 1791, Chief Justice Burger led a distinguished committee in celebration of the Bill of Rights, an occasion certainly worthy of note, especially in a decade upbeat on rights, worldwide, a time when a multitude of causes, often contradictory, enlisted the concept of rights—right to life for the unborn fetus, for instance, as well as right to death for the incurably moribund, right to leisure and right to work, but also right to unionize.

Hence the prudent must approach the event with caution. Two warnings are particularly appropriate.

First, the lawyers are in on it, and they play a game of their own. They are, after all, each trained to make a case, to advance the client's interests, not to discover or expound the truth. Therefore lawyers operate with procedures hostile to historical accuracy. In making a case, they proceed from the present backward to the past. A search for the most recent case leads to its precedents, and those in turn become the threads on which attorneys hang their arguments. In the nature of the

✪ OSCAR HANDLIN, Carl M. Loeb University Professor at Harvard University, is the author, with Lilian Handlin, of the four-volume *History of Liberty in America.*

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procedure, furthermore, legal training encourages the practitioner to tear phrases, concepts, and events out of context. Since present relevance is all-important, the actual bygone circumstances recede into a background of little consequence. The use to the litigant becomes far more significant than the meaning or intent of the old phrasemakers.

Surely enough, recent discussions of the Bill of Rights focusing on the present issue distort the text almost beyond recognition. Discussions of the First Amendment emanate from such issues as flag burning, panhandling on the subways, and obscenity, and they lead to debates over whether those actions deserve the protection of the 1791 safeguards of free speech. So, too, arguments such as those over the Mapplethorpe exhibition hang upon the question of whether government has the right to censor art, and they lead to the even more general issue of subsidies for the arts, so that deprivation of a grant becomes a measure that restricts freedom of expression. More recently, learned judges have debated the degree of nudity guaranteed topless dancers by the First Amendment. For five years, the federal courts pondered the constitutionality of an Indiana law that prohibited stripteasers at the Kitty Kat Lounge in South Bend from removing their G-strings. In June 1992, the Supreme Court finally upheld the statute by a five-to-four vote that rested upon four separate opinions *(Barnes v. Glen Theatre).* It requires generous exercise of the arts of debate to make these connections; but we have not been wanting in that respect.

Again, the Bill of Rights has entered into the abortion issue. The majority decision in *Roe v. Wade* pivoted on the right to privacy, infringement of which, the Court held, violated guarantees assured by the Bill of Rights.

Finally, litigants drag the broad issue of religious freedom, touched off by school prayer, back to the separation of church and state, also presumably a feature of the First Amendment. These efforts provide evidence of legal ingenuity; they do not further an understanding of the meaning of the Bill of Rights.

First warning, therefore: beware of the instrumental fallacy that tailors the past to the present use to which debaters put it.

A second warning concerns the disposition to regard the Founding Fathers, the authors of the Bill of Rights, as demigods. The very figure of speech—*Fathers*—exemplifies exaggerated respect and devotion. So, too, does the iconography: the surviving portraits show faces in repose, above the turmoil of immediate conflict, as do the statues in conventional relaxed postures. Yet it ought not surprise us to learn that the authors of the first ten amendments, like their contemporaries, were not objects of marble or paint on canvas, but human beings, flesh and bones—

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inconsistent, prone to mistakes, and often fallible in their judgments. The observation seems obvious, yet requires explanation.

While their countrymen debated the Constitution, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams—the ablest American theorists of their generation—lived abroad (probably a good thing that they did). Had they been present, the convention would have had much more difficulty in attaining the compromises embraced in that document. Jefferson lived in Paris and John Adams in London. Time hung heavily on their hands. With the treaties of peace signed, the emissaries had little business to transact. In Paris, Jefferson sought companionship and launched a discreet flirtation, first with Maria Cosway and then with Angelica Schuyler Church, both married and therefore both safe recipients of amorous letters.

No, however they bottled up emotions, these men were not devoid of passion—no, not the most intellectual of them. Jefferson, infuriated by a reference to someone else as author of the Declaration of Independence, laboriously composed an anonymous letter to the *Journal de Paris,* then refrained from sending it when it became clear that he could not conceal his identity. John Adams seethed with resentment at imagined slights, seethed with jealousy of rivals, and seethed with bitterness at real or fancied enemies. Young Alexander Hamilton, for a fancied slight, quit General George Washington's staff, foregoing opportunities for service and advancement. For a reflection on his honor he challenged the Reverend William Gordon to a duel in a wearisome correspondence. Like a country bumpkin he fell into the clutches of an English strumpet bent on blackmail.

These all-too-human traits explain the suspicion with which Jefferson and Adams viewed the Constitutional Convention at a distance.

Dribbles of information reached them (from Madison to Jefferson and from Abigail to John Adams). Their attention focused obsessively on one danger. They feared that the Constitution writers, meeting in secrecy in Philadelphia, would create a monarchy with Washington as king. Only the reflection that Washington had no children and therefore no incentive to establish a royal line somewhat eased their trepidation.

Supreme Court judges, then and later, were human too. On the bench and in posed photos, indeed in any public presence, they appear robed, immobile, inscrutable. Yet beneath those robes breathed men and women, living creatures of passion and prejudice as well as of learning and reason. We know more about past than about present occupants of the bench—John Marshall, given to fits of furious anger; Roger B. Taney, who in 1852 wrote a charming renewal of his pledge of love—to his wife, forty-six years after their wedding; Oliver Wendell Holmes, whose life the Civil War touched with fire and whose imagination flourished in correspondence and encounters with Lady Claire Castletown; Louis D.

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Brandeis and Felix Frankfurter, who pursued deeply held, although not publicly expressed, political agendas. We can wonder also whether Hugo L. Black's transformation from Klan member to liberal owed something to his friendship with Mrs. Clifford (Virginia) Durr while he served in the Senate. In other words, no impenetrable barrier of law shielded these creatures of flesh and blood from the influences about them, any more than legislators, congressmen, governors, or presidents. None of them argued about rights in isolation from life.

Behold, in this context, the Bill of Rights. Recall first that it did not form an integral part of the Constitution composed in Philadelphia and ratified by the states. Rather it consists of ten amendments (1791–1794) added at the request of some of the ratifying conventions. Why? Why did the framers not insert these provisions in the body of the Constitution?

Contemporaries clearly understood the answer: they needed no provisions of this sort. The Constitution formed a government of delegated powers. What it did not delegate, it did not grant; what it did not delegate, therefore, lay beyond the competence of president, Congress, and courts. Lest there be any doubt on this score, the Ninth and Tenth Amendments would make the point doubly clear. The enumeration of certain rights in the Constitution was not to deny or disparage others retained by the people; and the powers not delegated to the United States nor prohibited to the states were reserved to the states or to the people.

More important, Americans of the revolutionary generation believed that rights, the sacred rights of humankind, were not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. Alexander Hamilton explained that they were inscribed in the whole volume of human nature rather than in arbitrary clauses. Writing to Thomas Jefferson in 1788, James Madison pointed out that experience proved how ineffective a Bill of Rights was when it was most needed. Overbearing majorities in every state, past and present, repeatedly ran roughshod over these parchment barriers. Wherever the real power in government lies, Madison stated, there is the danger of oppression; and formal statements would do nothing to prevent such oppression. Experience would prove him right.

The extent to which the issue of rights arose, therefore, depended less on the phrases engrossed on parchment or inscribed in formal judicial opinions than upon the structure and the views of the community. The small town tolerated the village atheist, and Concord raised no objection to the abstract anarchist Thoreau. Dissent expressed in acceptable terms presented no threat to established order. So, too, the Quakers thrived in nineteenth-century, but not in seventeenth-century, Boston, and the federal government took ruthless action to extirpate Mormon

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polygamy regardless of the right to religious freedom. The First World War raised more drastic issues of sedition, and neither the people nor the legislatures nor the courts acquitted themselves well in that period. And during the Second World War, whatever the Constitution said about rights did not protect the Japanese-American citizens from being hustled off to concentration camps. Experience justified the belief of Hamilton and Madison that, although prefatory statements could do no harm, they were unnecessary and fallible and did little good.

These basic conditions explain the characteristic features of the Bill of Rights, which stands not as a distinct section or article of the Constitution, but as ten amendments added later. From the state ratifying conventions and from concerned citizens, dozens of suggested amendments poured in upon the congressional committee charged with making order of them, some proposals sincerely concerned with the substance of the matter, others from anti-federalists simply eager to torpedo the Constitution, and still others from perfectionists who hoped that endless squabbling would lead to the summons to a new constitutional convention in which abler theorists would devise a superior product. Jefferson very likely had some such prospect in view. Although Madison, charged with reviewing the proposals, did his best to make order of them, in the end, the Congress put those amendments together in a casual manner, by a hit-or-miss process, in no logical or coherent order. These propositions did not therefore form a reasoned catalogue of rights. Moreover, they contained no enforcement procedures, although their compilers recognized that there could be no right without a statement of a remedy.

Two amendments, Nine and Ten, dealt with the issue of delegated powers. The enumeration of specific rights shall not be construed to deny others retained by the people; and reserving to the states and to the people powers not specifically delegated to the United States. These statements spelled out one of the Constitution's basic assumptions.

Most of the other amendments (Two through Eight), residues of the Revolution, rested upon recollections of abuses that seemed worth guarding against in the future. They dealt with the militia, with the right to bear arms, with the power of the government to quarter troops in homes, with unreasonable searches and seizures, with jury trials, self-incrimination, and due process. Even references to these familiar matters were vague and imprecise, sometimes inconsistent, and sometimes in conflict with one another. *Jury* could have meant grand or petit, acting by majority or unanimity. Startling omissions reflected the haphazard fashion in which the compilers put the list of rights together. For instance, Americans valued no liberty more than the freedom of move-

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ment—a stark contrast with the situation in Europe, where barriers marked off every province and walled off every city. Silence about this right did not diminish its worth in more than a century's spread of settlement. Much later, it blocked California's effort to bar the entry of Okies and the attempts of cities to keep out newcomers who threatened to crowd the welfare rolls. Yet the Constitution and its amendments did not mention that right. Or the right to privacy—which was, no doubt, taken for granted. Yet the right to property did receive attention, not because it seemed more important or more threatened, but because the revolutionary experience brought it to mind.

Hence later efforts to make out the original intent of the framers miss the point: whose intent? The members of the state conventions who suggested the amendments, or the congressmen who framed them, or the conventions that ratified them, or the voters who elected those bodies? A hopeless task!

The crux of the contemporary issue, however, lay in the First Amendment—a statement more often referred to than remembered, and therefore worth quoting specifically.

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Note that the amendment and the rights safeguarded shackle Congress and not the states. Taken at face value, the First Amendment thus did not extend to a Texas law that forbade flag burning, which the Court struck down in 1987.

Furthermore the loosely phrased First Amendment left considerable latitude in practice. The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 safeguarded the rights of conscience, but also expected taxes to support churches. Many other states did so, too, and also retained test oaths for service as public officials. Jefferson and Madison in the Virginia statute on religious liberty wished a total separation of church and state, but the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 also stated that "religion, morality, and knowledge were necessary to good government." And even the federal Congress encountered no complaints when it appointed chaplains, opened sessions with prayers, and utilized religious emblems such as In God We Trust.

There was a reason why the references to freedom of speech and of the press restrained Congress, not the states, and applied to the use of

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words, not to art or to other forms of expression. Americans assumed that the protection served reasonable citizens capable of persuasion by rational argument, not flag burners blowing off steam or artists letting it all hang out. Francis Mezzara, a temperamental French portrait painter, discovered that free speech did not extend to art in 1817. When a subject who considered the likeness he painted insufficiently flattering refused to pay for it, Mezzara adorned the portrait with a pair of long ears usually worn by a stupid animal and put it on public exhibition. A plea of free speech did not spare him conviction of criminal libel. As late as 1968 in *U.S. v. O'Brien* (391 U.S. 367), Chief Justice Warren, speaking for the Court, held, "We cannot accept the view that an apparently limitless variety of conduct can be labelled 'speech' whenever a person intends thereby to express an idea." His colleagues would soon drift away from that sensible proposition.

For the same reason, the Founders did not believe that freedom of the press created a right to print lies, slanders, and sedition; and the conflict with other rights such as that to privacy troubled them. Orators and editors enjoyed the right to speak or print but not immunity from the consequences of abuses. John Adams's administration, after all, enacted a sedition act, and Jefferson as president did not hesitate to launch prosecutions under its provisions. Therein they followed the advice of Benjamin Franklin, himself a printer, publisher, and editor, who in 1789 made it clear that he would resort to the liberty of the cudgel against an impudent writer who went too far—break his head or tar and feather him. And he meant it.

The press was far from sacrosanct. Annoyed by the journalism of the early Republic, Jefferson expressed the view that the citizen who never saw a newspaper was better informed than a regular reader "inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer to the truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods." Justice Joseph Story summed it up for the next generation: The supposition that the First Amendment gave every citizen the absolute right to speak, to write, or to print whatever he might please, he considered too wild to be indulged by a rational man. To allow every citizen the right to destroy the reputation, the peace, the property, and even the personal safety of others would end civil society, with private vengeance compensating for the deficiency of law. Truth, he argued, was not alone sufficient to justify publication. In an orderly society, legislation would define the areas excluded, among them, he believed, obscenity and blasphemy.

Much has changed in the twentieth century, indeed in the last four decades. Rather than trace the wearisome steps by which those changes

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came about, it will be more enlightening to comment briefly on the consequences and the context of change.

First, the courts have applied the restraints of the Bill of Rights to the states by incorporating them under the Fourteenth Amendment, which held:

> No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

The amendment did not succeed in its primary objective—protection of the freed slaves. And the justices who broadened its scope ironically did so initially in order to limit local police power, striking down, for instance, laws limiting the labor of women and children. But gradually after 1920 the courts also invalidated restraints upon Catholic schools and upon proselytizing by Jehovah's Witnesses, upon obscenity, and upon some forms of expression. The phrase "due process" could apply in unpredictable fashion.

Second, the transformation came not by legislation or executive order or by constitutional amendment, but by judicial interpretation, with consequences still unfolding.

It requires no strenuous stretch of the imagination to understand the deficiencies of judge-made law. Rulings from the bench are not etched in stone; what the Court holds in one case, its successors can reverse in another. *Plessy v. Fergusson* upheld the constitutionality of Jim Crow laws; *Brown v. Topeka* struck them down. Stare decisis, precedent, is a convenient strategem, not a binding principle. *Roe v. Wade* reversed venerable practices by which states regulated sexual conduct; another court could evade, modify, or nullify its position.

Recall further that judges are human, too—guided by their own foibles, prejudices, and limited knowledge. And among the most insidious of human traits is the desire to *do something*, to make a mark on history, be more than a rubber stamp affirming the judgments of the past. In every ruling, the Supreme Court can choose broad or narrow grounds for its decision. It can refuse to hear a case, and it needs give no reason at all for doing so. It can rule on the narrow grounds of the case in hand and needs to announce its decision in no more than a curt statement. Or, it can take the occasion to soar in a broad decision that will earn a place in the history books. John Marshall did so in *Marbury* and Roger Taney in *Dred Scott*. The grand, sweeping rulings do not often have the dire consequences that *Dred Scott* did. But they all too often, nonetheless, carry the seeds of future trouble.

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Nevertheless, the reach for the broad memorable opinion remains tempting. In the *Brown* case, certainly one of the most historic of the century, the Court could have rendered a narrow decision. It could have ruled unconstitutional a state law establishing segregation in the public schools of Topeka. Instead, the decision took a broad view and held segregation, whether by law or de facto, inherently unconstitutional; any separation created inequality contrary to the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court thereupon ordered the federal district courts, with all deliberate speed, to desegregate the nation's educational system. All good-hearted friends of the public schools and advocates of racial peace joined in hailing the decision, as I myself did at the time.

In the four decades that have elapsed since *Brown*, all its gallant expectations have faded. Education has not improved, indeed very likely it has deteriorated. Urban schools are not less segregated than before; they are probably more so. And racial peace is as elusive as ever. Furthermore, experience has demonstrated the incorrectness of the social psychological research on which *Brown* drew. Schools with student bodies drawn from a single group as often as not provide a more congenial setting for learning and better preparation for social mobility than those with students artificially commingled.

The problems with *Roe* also originated in excessive judicial activism that began with efforts to circumvent anachronistic state laws designed to prevent the use of contraceptives. Connecticut's statute simply forbade the employment of any such device, even by consenting married couples. It dealt with *use*—that is, with action and behavior—not with information or speech within the purview of the First Amendment. What detection techniques could have harried out offenders is not clear. Nevertheless, a contrived test brought the issue to the Supreme Court. The judges did not like the statute at all but were hard put to find constitutional grounds for its invalidation.

A concerted drive for change then began, directed less at public opinion or at the legislatures than at the judiciary. The Planned Parenthood League, in the forefront of the campaign, drew support from the American Civil Liberties Union, which interpreted the issue as one of free speech, and of the National Council of Churches, which published *Responsible Parenthood* (New York, 1961), a powerful polemic in favor of planning. The doctrine of stare decisis, however, formed a great obstacle to change. In 1961 in the case of *Poe v. Ellman*, the Court refused to overturn the Connecticut statute, a decision without serious practical consequences except insofar as it demonstrated the difficulties in the way of judicial action.

Four years later in *Griswold v. Connecticut* (381 U.S. 479, 1965), the Court abandoned precedent and invalidated the Connecticut statute

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insofar as it applied to the behavior of married couples. In achieving the about-face, the Court drew upon arguments in the briefs submitted to it, and spoke of the changed climate of opinion that left the statute out of accord with modern reality. To arrive at that conclusion the justices had to disregard the fact that the Connecticut legislature, presumably in touch with public opinion, had refused to act, and furthermore that two referenda that also reflected opinion had also opposed change. Those subtleties did not matter. The Court's view had hardened. Justice William 0. Douglas, a cowboy willing to take risks on behalf of justice, pushed to strike down the silly law. Grounds? The right to marital privacy. The state could not intrude upon the privacy of the conjugal pair.

Now search as you will the text of the first ten amendments and all the commentaries upon them, and you will not find a reference to privacy. In a general sense, Americans had vaguely believed in the right to privacy but had not formulated it in any constitutional guarantee. And, in any case, the states had frequently regulated personal and family behavior without challenge.

To support his position, Douglas stated that the guarantees of the Bill of Rights went beyond their specific content. They included "penumbras" formed by emanations from those specified guarantees—a dangerous argument indeed, for it rested upon subjective judgments; one observer's penumbra may be the nightmare of another.

Nevertheless, the right of privacy in due course became central to the decision in *Roe v. Wade,* which dealt not with contraception but with the more inflammable issue of abortion, and which did not confine itself to the conjugal pair but extended to any couple, indeed to any female.

We have scarcely begun to explore the pitfalls of the right to privacy thus conceived. Does it apply to the relationship of parents to offspring—parental discipline ("Spare the rod and spoil the child"), battered children? Or to spousal relations, including traditional conjugal chastisement, wife beating? And a recent book by a distinguished professor of law criticizes affirmative action as an invasion of privacy. We may not yet have seen the end of that line of argument.

The effort to anchor the right to choice in the Bill of Rights by way of privacy did not settle the matter, which continues to divide citizens; for it rested upon exaggerated respect for the parchment barriers erected by judicial opinions. The citizens of the revolutionary era regarded theirs as a government by consent of the governed. And the governed respected the rights of others, not as defined by judges but as defined by their own experience and reason.

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Do We Still Need Academic Freedom?

EDWARD SHILS

SIDNEY HOOK ONCE TOLD ME of an observation made by John Dewey in his last years. Dewey, according to Hook, remarked rather wryly that, when the American Association of University Professors was formed in 1916, a committee A and a committee B were established. One was intended to deal with academic freedom and tenure and the other with academic obligation. The activities of the committee on academic freedom and tenure made up most of the agenda of activities of the Association; the committee on academic obligations had never once met, according to Dewey's recollection. The American Association of University Professors was a product of the situation in which some of the leading university teachers in the country thought that, because the academic profession was entitled to respect as a calling, they were entitled to academic freedom. Even in the second decade of the twentieth century, powerful persons outside the universities, and within the universities—trustees, presidents, and deans, or heads of departments—still regarded their academic staffs as hired hands to be appointed and dismissed at will. Such persons were regarded as the enemies of academic freedom. Although there are still some rough-handed presidents and deans in back-country colleges and state universities, on the whole these traditional enemies of academic freedom are seldom any longer to be seen.

In the minds of the American academics who were active in the early years of the Association, academic freedom and permanence of tenure were indissolubly associated with each other. At that time, it was said that the latter was needed to guarantee the former.

Academic freedom was declared to be an assurance that new ideas would be discovered, that sound old ideas would be appreciated in a more critical way, and that unsound ones would be discarded. The argument for academic freedom was roughly the argument for liberty in general put forth by John Stuart Mill in *On Liberty*. It was also

✪ EDWARD SHILS, professor of sociology and social thought at the University of Chicago and honorary fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, is the editor of *Minerva: A Review of Science, Learning, and Policy*.

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assumed by their proponents that academics, even if they did not discover new ideas, should be free, in their teaching and writing, to say what they believed. It was further assumed that they would not be arbitrary in what they believed and taught; it was accepted that they would try to tell the truth as it was understood by them from their study and rational reflection.

Since the chief sanction against academics who honestly spoke their beliefs in teaching was dismissal, the best protection for their academic freedom seemed to be the guarantee that such a sanction would not be exercised against them. Permanent tenure seemed to be that guarantee.

Permanent tenure now has gone off on a career of its own. It has become a self-evident good in itself; it has become "job security." Permanent tenure—or plain "tenure," as it is now called—is an object of great desire among academics, especially the younger generation who are preoccupied by it. I seldom hear it mentioned as an assurance of academic freedom. Yet whenever some modification of the current practice of providing permanent tenure after a probationary period or on the attainment of a particular rank is proposed, the argument that it is necessary for academic freedom is brought to life again. In those circumstances it is restored to its former status as the main argument for permanent tenure. This, however, is rather infrequent since the institution of permanent tenure is nowadays rather firmly established in American universities and colleges.

Academic freedom, too, has taken a path of its own. It is no longer thought that it has any close relationship to the search for or the affirmation of truths discovered by study and reflection. It has become part of the more general right of the freedom of expression. Expression is not confined to the expression of reasoned and logically and empirically supported statements; it now pretty much extends to the expression of any desire, any sentiment, any impulse.

II

University teachers in American society, since the Second World War, have become privileged persons. In the leading universities at least, they have a rather light stint of teaching. They have long vacations, they often have interesting young persons as students and friends, they sometimes have interesting colleagues. They can usually, in most universities much of the time, teach courses in which they are interested and not teach courses in which they are not interested. They are usually allowed, with or without the consent of their colleagues and administrators, to shift their academic interests within their fields, and they can vary their teaching and research accordingly. They are generally free to

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choose their subjects of research in accordance with their intellectual interests, within the limits imposed by financial resources, equipment, and the like. Compared with persons in many other occupations, they have immense privileges. Academic freedom is one of these privileges.

Academic freedom is not a universal or human right, enjoyed in consequence of being a member of the human race. It is not entirely a civil right of participation in the political activities of a liberal democratic society. It is not identical with the freedom of the citizen to act in the political sphere. The American university is an institution of the civil sphere; whether a private or state university, it is an autonomous institution with its own rules and standards of decision with respect to its characteristic activities—namely, academic activities. Academic freedom is a qualified right; it is a privilege enjoyed in consequence of incumbency in a special role, an academic role, and it is enjoyed conditionally on conformity with certain obligations to the academic institution and its rules and standards. It is an immunity from decisions about academic matters taken on other than academic or intellectual grounds, by academic, governmental, ecclesiastical, or political authorities.

Academic freedom has two parts. One, the most important, is the freedom to do academic things without the threat of sanctions for doing them. The sanctions may range from arrest, imprisonment, torture, dismissal, withdrawal of the right to teach, expulsion from learned societies or refusal of admission to learned societies, censure by academic administrators, refusal of due promotion, and imposition of exceptional or onerous tasks, to personal abuse and the disruption of classes.

Academic freedom, in this first sense, is the freedom to do academic things, to express beliefs which have been arrived at by the prolonged and intensive study of nature, human beings, and societies and of the best works of art, literature, etc., created by human beings, and by the reasoned analysis of the results of those prolonged and intensive studies. These beliefs, arrived at by careful study and reflection, must be made as true as they can be. Thus, academic freedom is the freedom to seek and transmit the truth. Academic freedom postulates the possibility of arriving at truthful statements and of discriminating among statements as to their truthfulness in the light of the evidence which is available to assess them.

The criterion of truthfulness is inherent in the activities of teaching and research. This means the freedom to teach according to the teacher's convictions about the matter taught, arrived at by careful study and with due respect to what is thought by qualified colleagues, without any of the sanctions mentioned above or others. It certainly includes the freedom

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to disagree with colleagues about matters of substance and to do so in accordance with reasonable evidence and arguments. It means the freedom to teach in ways which the teacher regards as effective as long as respect is shown for the rules of reasonable discourse, for the dignity of the student, and for general rules of propriety. It means the freedom to choose one's problems for research, to use the methods one thinks best, to analyze one's data by the methods and theories one thinks best, and to publish one's results. Academic freedom, in its specific sense, is the freedom to do academic things within the university.

Academic freedom is also the right of the academic to participate in those activities within the university which affect directly the performance of academic things. The right to participate in these activities also carries with it the obligation to do so. The privilege of academic freedom confers the rights and imposes the obligations of academic citizenship. In the first instance, this includes the right and obligation of the academic to participate in the decisions regarding the appointment of teachers and research workers who will work in his or her own department. It also includes the right and obligation to participate in decisions regarding the substance and form of courses of study, examinations, the marking of examinations, and the awarding of degrees. At this point, academic freedom becomes the right and obligation to participate in academic self-government.

In all cases, this freedom is hedged about by academic and intellectual traditions. These traditions, which are difficult to delineate, include not only the substantive intellectual traditions of disciplines and of fields of study and research, but also rules of conduct toward colleagues and students. These traditions must not, however, be so interpreted that they restrict the intellectual freedom of the academic; at the same time, their imprecision is not a license according to which anything goes.

Academic freedom is thus not an unlimited freedom of teachers to do anything they want in their classrooms or in their relations with their students or to work on just anything in their research by whatever methods they wish and to assert whatever they wish in their publications. There has to be, above all, concern to teach the truth, to attain the truth, and to publish the truth.

In matters of academic appointment, the decisive and overriding criterion must be the candidate's mastery of established truths, his achievements in discovering new truths, his respect for truth in teaching. The traditions regarding what is true, what are the best methods, and the rest, are not absolutely and unquestionably precise. They have to be interpreted, but they must be interpreted with respect for truth—and reliability—as the chief value of academic life.

The provision of academic freedom does not provide for the right to

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publish the results of one's research in any particular journal, regardless of the assessments of the editor and his referees about the scientific or scholarly merit of those results. Academic freedom does not include the right to obtain financial support for one's research regardless of the assessment of the intellectual merit of the proposed investigation rendered by qualified referees or peers. At the same time, the refusal of publication or of financial support on political, sexual, racial, or religious grounds is an infringement on academic freedom. It introduces other than intellectual criteria—that is, criteria derived from the central academic value of truthfulness—into decisions about academic matters.

The protection of the academic engaged in the performance of academic actions from sanctions imposed on him or her on the basis of political, religious, or sexual criteria is the central function or justification of the guarantee of academic freedom.

There is another set of activities which are to be protected from sanctions by the guarantee of the freedom of academics. This is the right of academics to the performance of legal political actions, to be members of or otherwise associated with legal political parties or societies, to participate in the activities of these bodies as freely as any other citizen of a liberal democratic society. Political activities such as the practice of terrorism, kidnapping, or assassination are not to be protected by the invocation of the principle of academic freedom, any more than they are assured by the right to political freedom of any citizen, academic or non-academic. The polemical justification or praise of terroristic activities in a liberal, democratic constitutional order is a marginal case.

Thus, there are the two sides of academic freedom. The first is obviously the most important for the pursuit of the values of academic life. The second—the civil freedom of academics—is of great importance to academics because it frees them from special burdens which are not imposed on other citizens. In that respect, it might also contribute to academic freedom in the first sense in that, by freeing the academic from a degrading discrimination, it allows him to perform his academic obligations with his mind untroubled by anxiety.

The civil freedom of academics does not extend to the conduct of political propaganda in teaching. It is easy enough to avoid this in the teaching of mathematics and the physical sciences. It is more difficult in the disciplines dealing with human beings and their works. In courses of political science, anthropology, economics, and sociology, the subject matter of which overlaps with the objects of political activity, the avoidance of political propaganda is more difficult; it is certainly not impracticable. The university or college teacher must strive to discipline himself in this matter. This is not because academics may properly be restricted in their political beliefs and in the expression of those beliefs

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but because the university is not an institution for the pursuit of partisan political objectives.

There are marginal phenomena which are close to academic freedom to which reference should be made. These include the freedom of individual students or associations of students or of senior members to invite non-academic persons to speak at non-academic assemblies on the premises of the university or college; they include the freedom of those speakers to express their views without obstruction or disruption. They include also the freedom of individual students or associations of students to express their views on political topics outside of classes but on the physical premises of the university.

These rights to freedom of expression of members of universities and colleges are not part of academic freedom. The right to discuss, outside the classroom in meetings open to the public on a university campus and in a rational way, differences between ethnic or sexual groups, or between religious groups, and so forth, is a civil right as much as the right to vote in elections or to stand for political office. Although the discussion takes place on the premises of the university or college, if it is "extracurricular"—if it takes place in a public meeting or in a conversation between two or three individuals—infringement on that right is not an infringement on academic freedom in the specific sense. But it is nevertheless an infringement on the freedom of the citizen, just as is the dismissal of a teacher who, outside the university in his capacity as a citizen, declares his support for one legal political party or another.

Historically, there have been other restraints on the actions of teachers in colleges and universities which, although infringements on their freedom, have not been infringements on academic freedom. The actions which they restrained were those which contravened primarily sexual morality. Adultery, for example, if exposed was often followed by dismissal; homosexuality likewise. Unmarried cohabitation, the same. "Keeping bad company," giving or attending "wild parties" at which alcohol was consumed and women smoked cigarettes might not alone be grounds for dismissal but, coupled with other infringements on conventional rules of conduct, could be grounds for dismissal or at least for the withholding of promotion or rises in salary. Nevertheless, those restraints on the freedom of conduct of academics were not regarded as infringements on academic freedom. The American Association of University Professors did not enter the lists on behalf of their victims. In recent decades the performances of such actions by academics scarcely causes an eyebrow to be raised, to say nothing of not calling forth substantial sanctions. In any case, they have never been seriously regarded as falling under the protection of the right to academic freedom.

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III

It is possible, if John Dewey's recollection was correct, that the reason for the inactivity of the committee B—the committee on academic obligations—lay in the assumption of the leaders of the American Association of University Professors that academics were, on the whole, fairly strict in their observance of their obligations in teaching and research and that this was generally understood by university administrators. It was assumed that academics were, by and large, dutiful with regard to the tasks of teaching—it was mainly teaching at that time—and in meeting the obligations of academic citizenship in the sense of the observance of the rules of academic life.

In most colleges and universities a moderate conservatism prevailed. The American Association of University Professors accepted that there might be reasons for dismissal; it did not come to the rescue of professors dismissed for adultery or homosexuality. Its concern was with the freedom of belief in political and religious matters, mainly political; it did not gainsay the right of colleges ruled by churches or sects to demand religious conformity. It was interested in the security of tenure, less because security of tenure was its main concern than because dismissal was the most frequently exercised sanction for the expression of political beliefs. The objectives sought were the academic freedom and the civil freedom of the academic; security of tenure was the chief means of protecting that freedom.

As long as it was concerned with the protection of the civil freedom of academics, the Association did not venture to limit the powers of the administrators of universities to require their teachers to do their academic duty and to conduct themselves in what were believed to be morally respectable ways.

It did not attempt to define the substance of teaching. It understood teaching to require that teachers teach their subjects or disciplines as these were laid out in the best literature of the field and to add to and improve on that literature in their research and teaching. It was recognized that knowledge about some topics was not always certain, and for that reason, such topics were to be presented so that the student would be enabled to distinguish the certain from the uncertain, the more probable from the less probable. Teachers were not to be interfered with or threatened with any penalty by any authorities within or outside the university, as long as they conscientiously taught the subjects which they were appointed to teach. They were, above all, not to be interfered with on political or religious grounds—that is, on grounds of political or religious statements outside the classroom.

The committee on academic freedom and tenure was not unmindful

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of the obligation of the teachers, whose academic freedom was to be assured, to teach their subject up to the level to which it had been raised by the work of the best scientists and scholars in their fields, up to the level of their own abilities, conscientiously exercised, and up to the level of the students' capacities and level of attainment. The teachers were to be assured of freedom of conscience or judgment, but they were not, without good reasons growing out of their own study and research, to wander far from the consensus of the respected authorities in their own branches of science and scholarship. Their freedom to diverge from the prevailing consensus in their subjects was to be guaranteed as long as the divergence was based on conscientious study, research and reflection, and their own understanding and appreciation of the traditions of their disciplines.

Academic freedom certainly extended to intellectual originality. It was for the departmental colleagues of their own university and their peers outside their own university, when one of them departed from that consensus, to decide whether the individual in question was being original, or divergent within reasonable limits, or eccentric to the point of mental incapacity, or impermissibly arbitrary, indolent, or otherwise irresponsible. Sanctions for their failure to conform with accepted intellectual standards could not be denounced on the grounds that they infringed on the right of academic freedom. Nor could frequently recurrent and unexcused absences from scheduled classes fall under the prerogatives to be assured by academic freedom.

Academic freedom did not include freedom to substitute a subject or topic for another subject or topic which had nothing to do with the subject or topic a teacher had been appointed or assigned or had agreed to teach. If a teacher were not reappointed—tantamount to dismissal—or not promoted on grounds of intellectual eccentricity, mental incapacity, or intellectual irresponsibility, that was not to be regarded as an infringement on academic freedom.

In other words, the protection afforded by academic freedom did not extend to the point of protecting the teachers in their derelictions from their obligation to seek and respect the truth in their teaching and research, according to their best lights and capacities. Similarly, if teachers fabricated, falsified, or plagiarized the results of their research, they could not claim the protection of academic freedom. Nor could they claim the protection of academic freedom for statements for which they had no evidence or which were flagrantly and arbitrarily contrary to the prevailing interpretation of the available evidence.

There are sometimes genuine difficulties in the way of deciding whether the departure of a teacher from the consensus of the best workers in the field or discipline is an original discovery or an arbitrary

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and baseless assertion. Furthermore, if the originality of thought is presented in teaching, then it is not easy for colleagues or superiors to discover what has in fact been said in the classroom. Of course, the difficulty of discovering what really goes on in the classroom has certainly afforded freedom, de facto, to academic malpractices which were, in principle, certainly not entitled to that freedom.

There was, I think, general consensus between university administrators and trustees, most academics and the American Association of University Professors that teachers were not entitled to claim the protection of academic freedom for the attempt to persuade students in classrooms to accept the teacher's own points of view on political or parochial religious topics which were not germane to the subject matter of the courses being taught.

IV

The American Association of University Professors sought the immunity of the individual academic from actions which would drive him from the path of the discovery and disclosure of truth or, in a more humble formulation, truths about things about which truth can be discovered. The American Association of University Professors seems to have thought that if individual academics could be protected, then all would be well. But a university as a collective undertaking to find and transmit the truth must not only be concerned to protect in their pursuit of the truth those persons who are already in it; it must be no less concerned to bring into itself persons who are zealous to discover the truth. If it does not do so, academic freedom will lose its justification.

For this reason, the process of selecting teachers who are going to be serious scientists and scholars is a precondition for the continued existence of the university as a corporation in pursuit of the truth. Life within the university—if it is a good university and is more than a technical or professional training college—strengthens the desire of the individual for the truth. But that strengthening can occur only in those who already possess the disciplined propensity and who have given evidence of it. The process of appointment must discover such persons; they are the persons who merit appointment to the university as teachers, scientists, and scholars.

Many American universities have not been as attentive to the process of appointment as they should have been, and the quality of the universities has suffered accordingly. In excuse for this slipshoddiness it can be said that there was a need for more teachers than there were well-qualified persons. This is probably true, but it was not an excuse for disregarding the criteria of achievement and promise of achievement. It

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may also be said that the capacity of assessors on appointment for accurate and reliable assessment is not as good as it ought to be and that mistaken assessments are inevitable. This is true, but it, too, is no excuse for acting contrarily or for being indifferent to the proper criteria of academic appointment.

It must be said, furthermore, that university and college teachers, where they are the assessors, and administrators—deans, provosts, and presidents, when they must assess the assessment—are often not as scrupulous as they ought to be. Nevertheless, all these things being said, the fact remains that in the leading American universities in the first two-thirds of the present century, considerable progress was made against the adduction of criteria of religious, political, and ethnic congeniality and of original social status in academic appointments, and parallel progress was made in the strict application of academically relevant criteria.

Appointments are not matters to which the category of academic freedom in the specific sense applies directly. But they are intimately connected with academic freedom because they are determinants of the concern for the attainment of the truths at which academic activity must aim and which academic freedom must protect. If persons who do not care deeply for truth are appointed, the university enlarges the part played by persons who care little for the objectives which merit the protections provided by academic freedom.

V

The situation of academic freedom in the United States is now very different from what it was three-quarters of a century ago, even half a century ago. Boards of trustees have become more refined; they are not as puritanical and self-righteous as they used to be and they are not as arrogant; they no longer regard their trusteeship as a police function or as a moral custodianship of the institution which they must protect from political radicalism or sexual impropriety. Presidents no longer act like headmasters of private secondary schools before the First World War. They do not watch their academic staff so closely and distrustfully, and, if they do, they are very reluctant to do anything which would cause the academics to complain against them. They have largely transferred their responsibilities for the internal affairs of universities to provosts and academic vice presidents, and these, too, are very reluctant to do anything to arouse the disapproval of their academics.

Churchmen, especially when they sat on the boards of trustees or when their sects, denominations, or churches had a statutory and financial relationship with the particular college or university, were

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often instigators of infringements on academic freedom. Now, except for the colleges ruled by fundamentalist religious sects, they no longer tamper with the freedom of their teachers. They are too skeptical, too liberal, and too fearful of being called illiberal to exert themselves as they once did to keep university teachers on the strait and narrow path of orthodox political and religious belief and puritanical sexual conduct.

The small-town press as well as the popular metropolitan press used to be among the institutions, external to the college or university, which from time to time raised a stir about the radicalism of a teacher in the local college or university. Now, to the extent that these small-town newspapers still exist, they practically never express the view that a teacher who criticizes any of the existing institutions of society should be removed from his post. Small-town editors are nowadays not very different from the writers of editorials and columnists and other journalists of the metropolitan press, which is far more sympathetic with collectivistic liberalism and antinomianism than it used to be.

More important is the fact that there has been a rather fundamental change in opinion in the United States, so that what was once a ground for disapproval is not even noticed anymore. In the days when American academics were moved to found the American Association of University Professors, to denounce the state government or the government of the United States, to accuse it of being a "tool of the interests," and above all, to assert such criticisms in time of war, to proclaim oneself as, in one way or another, a socialist, and—from 1917 until about a decade after the end of the Second World War—to praise or justify or apologize for or exculpate the Soviet Union could land a college or university teacher in trouble. The trouble might culminate, from time to time, in abrupt and unseemly dismissal, sometimes in a more patient biding of time so that a teacher could discredit himself by a scandal in his private life and therefore be dismissed with good conscience, or he could be encouraged to leave by denial of promotion.

University administrators are nowadays very reluctant to dismiss, suspend, or take any other action against teachers whose conduct falls short of the traditional expectations of morality or respectability. Dereliction of duty in teaching, always difficult to prove, is likewise viewed with a blind eye. More important for the matter under discussion here is the abstention of administrators from any sanctions against academics for radical political views or for political agitation in their classrooms. Administrators are, it is true, concerned to prevent "hate language"—usually by students—but this has little to do with the traditional occasions for the application of sanctions against academics. Where administrators do attempt to impose restrictions on verbal or graphic expression, it is usually on behalf of aggrieved and demanding groups of

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homosexuals, feminists, blacks, and Hispanics in the student body. The sanctions are not of the conventional sort; the imposition of attendance at a course of "sensitivity training" is a common sanction, sometimes imposed on teachers. Sometimes the provision of another course in the same subject is ordained by administrators who receive complaints from students that a particular teacher is insufficiently compliant with their demands or holds views of strictly academic subjects expressed in conventional academic journals that are contrary to the plaintive students' views on racial or sexual matters.

The point of these observations is that administrators are nowadays very fearful of taking actions of a sort which were, until about a quarter of a century ago, regarded as infringements on academic freedom proper or on the civil freedom of academics. Indeed, they lean over backward to avoid such infringements. Having broken down first in the face of the policies of affirmative action of the federal government, they have now often become pawns in the hands of "minorities" in their student bodies. It goes without saying that many teachers now enjoy a high degree of freedom to infringe on the obligations of academic life, such as conscientious teaching, respect for evidence, etc.

Even on issues which are intellectual or academic in the narrow sense—having to do with substance of teaching and research—university administrators have tended to avoid drastic action which would appear to be an intrusion into the academic side of the university. This has been evident in the way in which universities have responded to the discoveries of dishonesty in research. The falsification of evidence is surely one of the most dastardly actions in which an academic can engage. It is admittedly difficult to determine with complete finality that falsification has been committed, but even when the evidence has appeared to be conclusive, university administrators have been inhibited in their response. Is this because they have been persuaded over the course of many decades to abstain from intrusion into any academic matters? If that is so, then the inhibition is a gain for academic freedom, but it might still be a damage to the university. Perhaps it shows a deficiency in academic freedom, which is supposed to protect the search for truth but which, in these cases, protects the promotion of untruths.

The passivity of senior university administrators in the face of actions which would have called forth from their predecessors severe sanctions has moved hand in hand with the greatly increased frequency of the performance on the part of academics of actions which their predecessors would, out of fear of such sanctions, have abstained from or concealed. In other words, on the one side, there are more actions which were once proceeded against by administrators, and on the other, there

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is more indifference or timidity among administrators when confronting such actions.

VI

About 1960 the American Association of University Professors changed the order of its agenda by placing security of appointment and other matters related to the terms of appointment (salaries, requirements of the amount of teaching, and promotions) on the first part in its agenda. This was an indication that the threats to the civil freedom of academics and to the freedom of academics in sexual and political matters had diminished—almost to the vanishing point. The civil freedom of academics was never deleted, but it took second place in the concerns of the Association, which in fact became a trade union claiming the legal right of collective bargaining on behalf of its academic members.

This was an acknowledgment—unacknowledged in any explicit statement—that the civil freedom of academics, and of course the more specific substantive academic freedom, was now so well established that the academic profession and the officers of the American Association of University Professors could cease to be anxious about its protection.

The decision of the American Association of University Professors to become a trade union might also have been a response to the fact that many American college and university teachers had come to regard their academic appointments as "jobs" for which they were "hired" and from which they could be "fired," rather than as a calling or profession with its own proper moral and intellectual dignities and obligations. There certainly has been such a development. But most important in this shift in the view of the Association has been the fact that by the 1960s and 1970s, academic freedom and, above all, the civil freedom of academics had ceased to be the pressing issues that they had been in the first half of the century. Academics are certainly concerned about "tenure" or "job security," but they do not fear the abridgment of their academic freedom in any of the traditional senses conveyed by that term. In fact, they now take its existence very much for granted.

Another indication of how much the situation has changed in American universities in recent years has been the acceptance of the notion that a person who regards his or her task as a university teacher to make propaganda for socialism or for revolution among the students is not being unfaithful to his academic obligations and is therefore entitled to the protection of academic freedom. Nowadays, some teachers even think that the necessity and desirability of the destruction of the existing society and its cultural traditions should be incorporated into the syllabuses which they prepare for their students. They think that, as

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university teachers, they have a unique opportunity as well as a moral obligation to further the cause of revolution. Naturally they think that such activities should be carried on with all the guarantees afforded by the rule of a full academic freedom.

This conception of the obligation of a university teacher is a far cry from the original intention of the American Association of University Professors to protect academics from dismissal or from other penalties for the expression, outside the university, of political or religious views of an even moderately unconventional sort. The American Association of University Professors never contended that teachers should be assured of a right to conduct political propaganda before their students in class.

After the flurry of Senator McCarthy's hearings, academics, at first intimidated and humiliated, discovered during the agitation about the war in Vietnam that their academic freedom was as extensive as they wished to have it. They gained courage from the example of the students who affronted, mostly with impunity, the authorities of their universities and the government. But even without the agitation about Vietnam, a change had been taking place over a long period in the attitudes of university and college administrators. The antinomian inclination of the change was accentuated by the silent fear of injury arising from Senator McCarthy's menacing investigations. Intended to curb the radicalism and pro-Communist sympathies of many academics, McCarthy's activities, in the end, aggravated them. They came out all the more strongly once it became safe to abuse their own government and their own universities.

VII

The movement of university presidents away from the domineering, imperious attitudes which they had previously expressed toward their academic staffs has been a part of the weakened position of institutional authority in Western countries over the past half century and particularly in the United States. This has gone hand in hand with a quite separate tendency toward the elevation of the status of the academic profession in the United States and the elevation in its self-esteem. This has been neither a unilinear trend nor a homogeneous one. It reached its peak several decades ago and has either stood still or declined since then.

Ever since the formation of the three new universities—Johns Hopkins, Clark, and Chicago—in the last quarter of the nineteenth century on the model of German universities, a new type of university teacher appeared in the United States. Energetic in the determination to discover new truths by research, the professors of this type insisted on facilities for research and for independence from authorities outside the

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universities. They would not accept a status of inferiority to a person who was not himself a scholar or scientist. They were on the whole not opposed to businessmen, but they would not be bullied by them either.

This change in the regard in which academics held themselves was probably relatively rare at the turn of the century. It was not found in many universities. It occurred first in those that sought to appoint persons of outstanding intellectual achievement or promise of achievement. They were in many instances persons who had studied abroad, particularly in German universities. The proud German professor was their model. Service on the sufferance of the president was not compatible with that ideal.

The change in attitude toward their own status was not a movement initiated or borne by radical university teachers. In fact, there were very few radical teachers at that time. The increased unwillingness to be subordinated by administrators was related to pride in being a scientist, especially, but also in being a scholar. Academics were aware that they were members of an international community of learning. They felt akin to the great Germans whom they regarded as among the greatest figures of living generations, and as such they would no longer be treated as "hired hands." The movement went very slowly until even as late as the 1930s. Most academics, however, quietly accepted their subordinate status.

University presidents gradually understood the message communicated by the spoken attitudes and unspoken bearing of their professors. Gradually the real constitution of the universities began to change. The statutes and bylaws probably did not change in written form until the second half of the present century, but in fact the "real constitution" began to change in the leading universities by the 1920s. The greatest change occurred when new appointments to departments began gradually to be made by the professors in the departments and were no longer made by presidents and deans. There has never been a legally self-governing university in the United States in the sense of the self-government of Oxford or Cambridge colleges, in which the governing body consisted of the master and the fellows. Nevertheless, although very unevenly, the leading American universities moved toward department- and university-wide self-government in academic appointments and in other academic matters.

With this, they also moved, in the leading universities, into a period of greatly increased academic freedom. University teachers gained civil academic freedom. They gained it at a time when, given their growing interest in politics and the prevalence of the earlier pattern of the concentration of authority in the university, they would have been on a collision course. The course, even when the administrators showed

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willingness to withdraw, still was by no means one of perfectly safe navigation. It has not been an unswervingly unilinear movement.

American academics became more interested in politics around the beginning of the fourth decade of the present century. There had been little interest in politics before that. There had been a few radicals, but they were relatively isolated in their universities. In the 1930s, such radical attitudes became more common among academics, but they were still relatively scant in number. Many were swept into the wake of the New Deal, yet even they were a minority of the academic profession, concentrated among younger teachers and primarily in the humanities, social sciences, and theoretical subjects. There began to develop a hostile attitude toward the traditional economic, political, and cultural orders in the United States.

With that hostility, the situation of academic freedom also changed. A new category was added to the justification for infringement on the civil freedom of academics. Whereas before the First World War, radical "political" academics were charged with being inimical to private capitalism, to puritanical individualism and its sexual morality, and with being sympathetic to socialism, they were now, additionally, or instead, charged with loyalty to the Soviet Union and to the communistic social system which was even more abhorrent than its socialist variant.

The character of the infringers also changed. Coalitions of trustees of the colleges or universities, local businessmen, and newspaper editors had once been the chief agents of infringement. The presidents of the colleges or universities had been their agents. Sometimes they were not their agents but acted independently, perhaps in anticipation of the prospective reactions of the external persecutors, perhaps in accordance with the dictates of their own rectitude.

Before the Great Depression, federal politicians paid practically no attention to universities. State politicians had hitherto taken little notice of universities, except to vote generous appropriations for them. Sometimes a legislator might be aroused to action against a state university by an angry constituent, but, by and large, universities were esteemed by state legislators and they forbore to intrude. There were other reasons, too, for the good relations between state legislators and their state universities. The state universities stood high in popular esteem, and, by their training and services, they served the governments and the people of their respective states well.

Populistic political radicalism was relatively acceptable in certain states—although not always or uniformly so. Xenophilic radicalism, bohemian radicalism, radicalism which extolled the working classes over farmers and businessmen did not go down so well. The decades between the two great wars saw an increase, at first very slight, in

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xenophilic—particularly Russophilic—radicalism in the universities. So slight was it that at the beginning of the 1920s, the xenophobic Lutz Committee of the New York state legislature—passionately hostile to radicalism—left the universities practically unnoticed in its quest for subversive intentions and actions. Ten years later, when the marked increase in political interest began in the universities, anti-radical investigative committees of state legislatures proliferated, and they gave considerable attention to the universities. The epidemic lasted for about twenty years; then it lost its force.

The decade before the Second World War and the first post-war decade were years of menace to the civil freedom of academics. The number of academics brought before these investigative committees was fairly small. There were some dismissals and much anxiety among some of the academics who had been fellow travelers or members of the Communist party in the 1930s. There is no evidence that academic freedom in the more exact sense—freedom in teaching and research—was affected by the harassment conducted by the investigative committees. Nevertheless, their consequences were very significant.

At first, they had a very intimidating effect. Even at a university where academic freedom was as assured as it was at the University of Chicago, and where there was so little sympathy with communism, some of the teachers thought that they should step carefully lest they be attacked. It was a period when academics were rather prudent and tried to avoid doing anything which might arouse the curiosity of Senator McCarthy. This was a period when the word "fascist" as a description of a major feature of American society came readily to the minds of academics. The inquisitorial senators and congressmen and state legislators and their unwholesome informants and junior persecutors were regarded as forerunners of a fascist regime in the United States. The congressional hearings confirmed apprehensive academics in their collectivistic liberalism and in their admiration for the Soviet Union, where they thought honest men were not persecuted. The intimidation was accompanied by severe alienation from American political, economic, and social institutions. The intimidation lasted only until the latter part of the 1950s. The alienation still persists and expands. A polymorphous alienation has taken hold in departments of the modern humanities and in the "soft" social sciences. Antinomianism runs through them all.

VIII

In the face of the far-flung expansion of the new forms of radicalism and, above all, of emancipationism, college and university presidents, provosts, and deans have been very complaisant. Many of them approve

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of the new trends of antinomianism, either because they think that emancipation from all traditional norms is right or because they are fearful of the angry criticism of the minority of their teachers and students who are enthusiasts for emancipation. They combine autocracy with supineness.

The situation is of a mixed complexion at present. There are still colleges and universities where the president acts as college and university presidents acted a century ago, although their number has been decreasing. They and their deans and vice presidents frequently do as they wish; they appoint, promote, refuse to promote, and dismiss as they wish. But most of them, including many who are tyrants in other respects, also accommodate themselves to the emancipationists. Hence, in such universities and colleges the imperious actions of the administrators are not directed against radicals and bohemians and others who were previously the object of the restriction of the civil freedom of academics. As far as academic freedom proper—the freedom of the academic in academic matters—has been concerned, the administrators have seldom interfered except in denominational colleges where the biblical accounts of cosmogony and geology and the history of ancient Judaism were contradicted by the achievements of geochronology, geophysics, paleontology, the "higher criticism," and evolutionary biology.

IX

The concern about academic freedom on the part of the teaching staffs of the American colleges and universities well into the 1950s was not by any means shared by most of their colleagues. The fact is that even in the time of its greatest prosperity, the American Association of University Professors never attracted to its membership more than a minority—often only a very small minority—of the teachers in any college or university. Most academics have not and do not give much thought to academic freedom. For many of them, it has not been an issue at all. They did not dream of doing any of the things which might have been the object of sanctions and for which the protection of academic freedom would have been adduced. They have usually been indifferent when sanctions were visited on a colleague in some remote department for having expressed himself outside the university on some political or social issue.

Some teachers, especially in schools of medicine, business, engineering, and agriculture, think that the persons whose academic freedom is being infringed upon are in fact being given their just desserts. Many are simply indifferent. Only a minority has become exercised about infringe-

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ments on academic freedom. They have become extremely indignant that some of their colleagues have been deprived of academic freedom or have been threatened with such deprivation; they have usually insisted that those colleagues were blameless. But of those who thought that way, many were usually too intimidated to complain in public. They were simply cowardly.

It has sometimes been thought that university teachers are bound to be fervent in their devotion to academic freedom. It has been thought that even those who are not impassioned for it in principle would not look with favor on the restriction of the academic freedom of their colleagues. In fact, however, the situation has been quite otherwise.

There are many academics who disapprove of those who rock the boat, who cause commotion, who instigate external criticism of the university, who attract the disfavor of prominent persons outside the university. They are often unsympathetic with colleagues who become the objects of restrictions on their academic freedom. There are many reasons for this: they might not like their political views; they might dislike them personally; they might not like to have the reputation of their college or university darkened by criticism of government, and so on.

I mention in passing what happened at Columbia University about two decades ago. The department of the history of art would not turn over to the agents of the United States Department of Labor charged with the enforcement of the policy of affirmative action the records of its deliberations and other documents bearing on the appointment of teachers in the department. Thereupon the federal government, at the behest of the Department of Labor, ceased or threatened to cease all payments on grants or contracts with the university or grants to it. Naturally, this was bound to affect severely the medical school and the departments of physical and biological sciences. There was much resentment in the latter sections of Columbia University against the department of the history of art for insisting on the autonomy of the university; they wanted to get on with their research and they did not want to be hampered by the obstinacy of the department of the history of art in refusing to yield to the federal government. When, about two decades before that, a small group of brave academics, led by Edward Tolman of the University of California at Berkeley, refused to subscribe to a loyalty oath to be imposed on university teachers by the state government because they regarded it as an infringement on academic freedom, they were bitterly castigated by many of their colleagues for "creating a fuss" and for endangering the position of the University of California before public and political opinion in California.

The situation is a paradoxical one. The academic profession, taken as

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a whole—all fields, departments, and disciplines included—is not especially concerned with academic freedom. A small number of persons of high principle, such as John Dewey, Arthur Lovejoy, and Glenn Morrow, and others, were very concerned with it. Those whose academic or civil freedom was threatened, or who were in danger of sanctions for having acted in ways in which they were reproved, or who had already suffered such sanctions, invoked academic freedom as a means of protecting themselves. How much they cared for academic freedom in principle is unclear. Academic Communist party members or admirers of the Soviet Union never concerned themselves about the academic or civil freedom of university teachers in the Soviet Union. Yet many of them were the first to invoke the protection of academic freedom when they were being harassed or when sanctions were in prospect against them and their kind.

The freedom of academics to do the things for which sanctions were in the past inflicted on them has, in the past several decades, never been in a more impregnable position. Academics in the United States enjoy unprecedented freedom to say and do things which fifty and seventy-five years ago were the objects of severe sanctions by academic administrators, supported or pressed by businessmen, politicians, clergymen, and others. In that sense, the founders of the American Association of University Professors have been nearly completely successful. Seldom has an ideal been so nearly attained as that of academic freedom. The particular freedoms which they sought are now, at least for the time being, secure.

Nevertheless, in some respects, academic freedom is more infringed on now than it has been for several decades. These latter infringements are not unilaterally imposed by university administrators or instigated by the old external custodians—often self-appointed—of the university. They are imposed by incumbent academics, encouraged by the policies of the federal government, which is a relative newcomer on the academic scene. Infringements on academic freedom are nowadays, to a greater extent, infringements imposed from within the university and even from within the teaching staff. But these internal enemies of academic freedom do it with confidence in their external support.

X

The executive branch of the federal government of the United States had never, until the 1960s, sought to enter into the heart of the university. It is true that, since the Second World War, it had become the chief patron of scientific research in universities. This patronage gave it great power over the choice of research projects and over decisions as to

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which fields of research are to be cultivated. On the whole, it has exercised these powers with as much tact and consideration for academic interests as its financial power and its interest in the practical application of scientific discovery have permitted. At various times, it has gone a little astray, but on the whole these deviations have been rare. As far as the conduct of research, once undertaken, it has let investigators be very free to follow their own lights.

This regard for the primacy of intellectual interests in academic institutions has, however, not been a uniform policy of the federal government. In its desire to guarantee that discrimination against blacks be brought to a halt, it has adhered to a policy of what has been called "affirmative action." In the execution of this policy, the executive branch of the federal government has for two decades intruded into the process of academic appointment through its insistence that the universities follow the stipulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the appointment of "minorities," meaning blacks, women, Hispanic-Americans, etc. In a variety of ways, a steady pressure has been exercised on universities to appoint individuals of the categories previously discriminated against. The threat of withholding grants and contracts for research and for scholarships on which the universities have become dependent has compelled the universities to accept the policy of affirmative action as their own. The incumbency of Republican, reputedly conservative, presidents has not diminished or attenuated the pressure for affirmative action in academic appointments.

As evidence of good faith, universities have appointed affirmative action officers to see to it that the policy of affirmative action is followed. These administrators have frequently been a goad to those who appointed them to use their authority to press for more appointments of "minority teachers." A consensus among senior administrators, with or without the representations of the affirmative action officer, puts the burden on departments to carry out this policy. Within each department in the modern humanistic and in the "softer" social sciences (that is, the social sciences other than economics), it is commonly understood that the higher administrators will look favorably on recommendations for appointments of candidates from "minorities."

Now there would be no reasonable objection if this policy were intended to suppress discrimination against "minority" candidates. The fulfillment of the policy goes much further. Departments and whole divisions of distinguished universities make commitments that a determinate proportion of all their appointments will be made from among candidates of the groups hitherto discriminated against.

This policy is inimical to the ideal which is to be served by academic freedom. To put it simply, the decision to give precedence to appoint-

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ments of persons from "minorities," hitherto discriminated against, very frequently entails disregard for the criteria of intellectual achievement and promise of intellectual achievement. This means that the criteria of the candidates' determination and capacity to pursue and transmit truths about the matters taught, investigated, and studied in universities are given a secondary position in the making of appointive decisions.

Such decisions have a self-accentuating tendency. Once one such appointment is made, it is a precedent for other such appointments. Such appointments become the normal thing. They also generate within a department a group of proponents of more such appointments.

The governmental policies of affirmative action and "positive discrimination" have an expansive tendency. They are accepted as self-evidently right by university administrators and teachers. Recently, the Middle Atlantic States Association, one of the accrediting associations which has been assigned the task of testifying to the educational genuineness of institutions seeking financial aid from the federal government, has sought to compel colleges and universities which wish to be accredited to comply with its demand for "diversity." "Diversity" is a euphemism for the appointment of more African-Americans, women, and Hispanic-Americans, for offering more courses in black studies, women's studies, gay/lesbian studies, and for reducing the preponderance in the syllabuses of the cultural achievements of older, white, male persons of heterosexual orientation. The investigative teams of the accrediting association which have wished to impose this standard of "diversity" on colleges and universities are also academics and academic administrators. Their conduct is evidence of how compliant university and college administrators are to the governmentally required, or encouraged, suspension of academic criteria. The United States Department of Education, in a reversal of federal governmental policy, refused to renew the accreditation of the accrediting body. This was a momentary check on the drive toward enforced "diversity." The demand for "diversity," at the expense of academic freedom traditionally understood, continues nonetheless.

There is something else to be said about the policies of affirmative action and "positive discrimination." These policies have been put forward and adopted at a time when the traditions of ethnic discrimination were already being discarded. These policies have greatly accelerated the movement. This improvement of civility in the United States has, however, coincided with and also contributed to a more general turning against American society and Western civilization among academics in the humanistic subjects and in certain of the social sciences. This does not mean that all the beneficiaries of the policy of "positive discrimination" have become exponents of this hostile attitude toward

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the traditions of American society and of Western civilization in general.

The confluence of the valiant and long-overdue, if misguided, effort to eliminate discrimination against blacks and women with the emancipationist attitudes which were latent in collectivistic liberalism, and with an uprooted and disillusioned Marxism, has touched the foundations of academic freedom. It has touched the most crucial point in the justification of academic freedom. Academic freedom is only justified if it serves the causes of the discovery and transmission of truth by scientific and scholarly procedures.

XI

An aggressive and intimidating body of antinomian academic opinion has gained in strength. It has objectives very different from those which the American Association of University Professors once sought to protect.

In its view the equality of "genders," the equality of "races," the equality of "cultures," the normality of homosexuality are the only real values, while the criteria of truthfulness are illusory, deceptive, and fundamentally intended to exploit women, people of color, homosexuals, and the poor. The value of academic freedom is denied; it counts for nothing alongside these other values, since the truth which it would protect is declared to be an illusion.

The theory of academic freedom rests on the view that the truth can be achieved and that it can never be attained by coercion or by fear that the political, economic, or religious powers will inflict sanctions for any view which is contrary to their own. If there are no criteria of validity or truthfulness, because no statement can ever be truer than any other statements, then it is useless to attempt to assess the validity of the achievements of scholars and scientists. It is useless to attempt to assess the scientific or scholarly achievements of candidates for appointment or to decide which students have done well or poorly in their dissertations and examinations. What is there for academic freedom to protect except security of tenure and the prerogative of frivolity. That is not what the founders of the American Association of University Professors had in mind when they took in hand the strengthening of academic freedom in American colleges and universities.

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The Sign

FREDERICK MORGAN

We came to a low bare hill
and climbed its rocky side,
and found where right at the top
someone had been crucified.

The cross was made of cedar,
its foot wedged deep between stones,
and it canted forward gently
to show off its load of bones.

A short but stocky skeleton
was bound to the unyielding wood
by chains so tightly clenched
they'd hold it there for good—

or so at least it seemed,
for the bones were mostly in place.
I took a step or two forward
to look the thing in its face.

"A short man but a bruiser,"
said Schwartz, after he and Hall
and I had made our inspection.
But was it a man at all?

The rib cage was intact—
the pelvic structure, too—
the spine had held its place
though ever so slightly skewed,

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and the skull remained entire
with lower jaw still hinged.
We all three stared and stared at it,
and it stared right back and grinned.

If this was a man, he'd been fashioned
too bulky and thick for his height,
with a head disagreeably large
and proportions that hadn't come right.

Yes, it looked like a man—but was hateful.
That much came clear to my mind
as I fought off obscure intimations
of something still worse near at hand. . . .

"It's an odd kind of ape, I imagine,"
said Hall, "though I'm really not sure,
or maybe a freak, or mutant,
a being that filled them with fear

and blind horror, the people who did this—
who left him to parch and starve
and suffer such ultimate torment.
One wonders what people they were."

"And why on a cross?" muttered Schwartz.
"Did it matter so much how he died?
Was blasphemy what they were after?
And where does the evil reside—

in this hideous sacrificed thing
(and to me it looks evil as sin)
or in those who condemned him?" Well, clearly
Hall and I had no answer for him,

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so I only asked, "What to do now?"
"Nothing," said Hall. "Let him be.
Were you thinking of Christian burial!"
Schwartz groaned—and said, "I agree."

It was settled. We'd never reveal it,
this secret so grand and malign.
We descended, resuming our journey,
and left him up there as a sign.

✪ FREDERICK MORGAN is co-editor of *The Hudson Review*. His most recent book is *Poems: New and Selected*, published by the University of Illinois Press.

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Working

DENNIS SAMPSON

"What are you doing down there?"
my mother asked, and from the depths
of the basement my father answered, "Working!"
And though she never seemed quite satisfied
with this, she'd go about her business
clearing the table of its wreckage,
plates and silverware, while we watched television.

Was he erecting a toy to be unveiled ecstatically
at Christmas, an elaborate contraption
doted over by my sisters and me
until we fought and he took it away forever?
Was he writhing in agony
in that squalid room
over a diagram drawn in pencil? Over a digit?

Drifting to sleep, my mother gone to bed,
I'd hear him climb the stairs and listen
to the click of one light after the other
and clatter of coins on his dresser. "What
were you doing down there?" my mother asked,
gently now, and he said "Working"
in a voice so melancholy it filled me with fear.

Many Christmases have vanished
without any revelation of my father's intent
as he bent to whatever was at hand,

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no extraordinary machine of ropes and pulleys
grotesque on the dining-room floor. Tonight
I hear my wife
above the chorus of children's screams,

"What are you doing down there?"
and look up suddenly
from my sanctuary of a poem
my father would have trouble understanding,
waiting for him to say
after a pause timed perfectly, "Working!"
on a past I only imagined might be redeemed.

✪ DENNIS SAMPSON is the author of two books of poems, *The Double Genesis* and *Forgiveness*.

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Scientific Ph.D. Problems

DAVID GOODSTEIN

WORD HAS GOTTEN ROUND THAT the country will face a grave shortage of Ph.D.'s, in both the sciences and the humanities, later in this decade. Within academic middle-management circles this dilemma is well known to be related to the "pipeline" problem. Just say the word *pipeline* and every dean in earshot will nod gravely, expecting the phrase to be self-explanatory. The idea is that our young people start out in the early grades as a torrent of bright, eager, curious minds, ready to study and learn and become scholars and scientists, but wind up at the other end of the line as a mere trickle of Ph.D.'s. Thus, our entire educational system is seen as a leaky pipeline, badly in need of repair. To make matters worse, the number of American students who go to graduate school has been declining for a decade, the number of the best students who take on graduate study has been declining for two decades, and half the students who do start graduate school drop out before they get their Ph.D.'s.

Moreover, the story goes, these are difficult times for professors as well, especially in the sciences. Leon Lederman, one of the true leaders in American science, recently issued a booklet titled *Science—The End of the Frontier*. The title is a play on *Science—The Endless Frontier*, the 1940s report by Vannevar Bush that led to the creation of the National Science Foundation and the modern academic/government research establishment. Lederman argues that university-based scientific research is being starved to death by government underfunding. Professors, who got their positions by proving their skills as scientists, spend all of their time raising money for research instead, and the best students, who quickly catch on to the situation, are discouraged from aspiring to go into the research profession. I confess to being the anonymous Caltech professor quoted in one of Lederman's sidebars to the effect that my main responsibility today is no longer to do science, but rather to raise money to feed my graduate students' children. Lederman's appeal was not well received in Congress, where it was

✪ DAVID GOODSTEIN, vice provost and professor of physics and applied physics at the California Institute of Technology, is the author of *States of Matter* and the creator of the PBS television series "The Mechanical Universe."

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pointed out that academic research support is not an entitlement program, nor in the press, where the *Washington Post* was seen to speculate about the unlikely specter of hungry children haunting the hallowed halls of Caltech.

I should like, at this point, to raise my hand modestly and point out that all of these concerns are misplaced. The Ph.D. shortage is an illusion, a kind of mirage caused not by the hot sun but by too much staring at statistics unmoderated by serious thought. What we face instead is a chronic, systemic oversupply of Ph.D.'s, a rising tide of Ph.D.'s that we seem helpless to stem. The educational system is not a leaky pipeline, and if it were and we could repair it the result would be a genuine torrent of Ph.D.'s that would threaten to flood the place. And finally, the very real problem Lederman writes about is caused by the fact that we have too many academic researchers. It is a consequence not of government penury, but of academic promiscuousness.

To be sure, the Ph.D. is the jewel in the crown of American education. The crown is badly worn and much tarnished, but the jewel is brilliant nevertheless. In spite of an education system that is abysmal in every respect from kindergarten through college, we lead the world in most fields of scientific research. That research is done in our universities, by our graduate students, who are, without a doubt, the best in the world. Young scholars from all over the world, if they are going to have a serious career, especially in the sciences, must spend at least a year of postgraduate study in the United States. Before World War II, American students who aspired to the upper reaches of science had to go to Europe for the same purpose. It is said that in antiquity, Roman students likewise went to Greece. This era may or may not be seen by history to be the point at which America passed the torch of world leadership to other hands, but we do seem to be playing the role traditionally reserved for the former world leader, at least in graduate studies in the sciences.

I believe, however, that even this last pocket of excellence in American education will eventually be brought to grief, because we are constitutionally incapable of solving our chronic problem of Ph.D. overproduction. To understand my personal view of this issue, it is necessary to go back more than twenty years, to 1970, when I was a young assistant professor of physics at Caltech. At that time I became aware that it had become difficult for Ph.D.'s to get jobs. Even Caltech Ph.D.'s in physics—in other words, my very own students—couldn't necessarily get any jobs their hearts desired.

Casting about for an explanation of this unhappy phenomenon, I happened on the book *Little Science, Big Science* by Derek da Sola Price. From that book I learned that the number of Ph.D.'s in science (or any other quantitative measure of the size of science) had been growing

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exponentially, with a ten-year doubling period, since about 1700. If that trend continued, every man, woman, and child in the United States would have a Ph.D. in physics by the year 2080.

Now I was really alarmed. My students' difficulties in finding a suitable job were symptomatic of the saturation of the growth curve. I could not anticipate a steady flow of graduate students in the future. If that happened, who would do my research for me? I tried to imagine what would be needed to design a stable, sustainable academic world. At the time, ZPG, standing for zero population growth, was a popular slogan. What would be required for ZPG in academic science? The answer was not hard to find: each professor in a research university should produce, on the average, during an entire career, no more than one graduate student who would become another research professor. In the system as it then existed, in the scientific fields I was familiar with, each professor was turning out an average of about fifteen Ph.D.'s per career! Of course not all Ph.D.'s become research professors, but a lot do, and most would like to if they could find such a job. Obviously, the system would have to be changed dramatically if we were ever to reach a sustainable steady state.

I discussed the problem with my colleagues at Caltech. No one disputed my reasoning, but all stoutly resisted any suggestion that we change our ways. They knew the proper solution: all universities would go out of the graduate business with the exception of Caltech and a handful of others, who would continue happily on, doing as we had always done. One exception to this attitude was expressed by Harold Brown, then president of Caltech, later secretary of defense. He had a more creative idea. Brown (who himself has a Ph.D. in physics but never actually practiced the trade) said the solution was to require a Ph.D. in physics as a kind of mental discipline before beginning any serious career, just as Latin and ancient Greek had once been required for the British civil service. At least that would put the problem off until 2080.

As it has turned out, neither I nor my colleagues at Caltech nor Harold Brown anticipated correctly what was to happen over the next twenty years. What has happened is that foreign students have rescued the great American academic research machine. Today, in many fields of science and engineering, half or more of the graduate students in the United States are from abroad. They have replaced the American students for whom there would have been no jobs anyway, and life in the research universities has not changed very much from what it was in 1970.

To understand the dynamics that led to all of this, it is necessary to go back yet another twenty years. Beginning around 1950, the government's newfound responsibility to support scientific research in the universi-

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ties, combined with the G.I. Bill of Rights, produced a brilliant golden age for the American academy. Before the war, about 8 percent of our young people went to college, a figure comparable to that in England or France. Higher education was reserved for the rich and the intellectually elite. After the war, however, spurred by the G. I. bill, we became the first nation on earth to try the noble experiment of mass higher education. Today, more than half of our young people get some sort of post-secondary schooling and nearly one-third actually graduate from college. Thus, the period from 1950 to 1970 was one of breakneck expansion in the U.S. academic world. The number of Ph.D.'s in America increased explosively during that period, and they were absorbed by the need created by rapidly expanding college enrollments. It was an exhilarating time to be a professor, and the people expected it to go on forever.

It could not go on forever, of course. By 1970 even I had begun to notice the ominous signs of a declining academic market. To be sure, the rapid growth in Ph.D.'s fitted smoothly onto Price's exponential growth curve, but it was the last hurrah of exponentail growth (which had extended back unbroken, remember, to 1700). With half the kids in college already, it would never happen again. The golden age was over.

But we didn't know it at the time. And, during the long period of exponential growth, we had developed a system in which it was considered normal, even virtuous and necessary, for each professor in a research university to produce, on the average, fifteen Ph.D.'s in the course of a career, many of them aspiring themselves to become research professors who would themselves turn out fifteen more Ph.D.'s. In a time of exponential growth, that's just what was needed. In a time when no more growth is possible, it is a prescription for disaster. Moreover, it is not easily changed. The social structure of the typical university scientific research group is such that it demands that enough graduate students be around that one is bound to graduate every couple of years. Besides, there is a well-entrenched bureaucracy, typically presided over by the dean of graduate studies, that would not be pleased should graduate enrollments begin to drop.

Enter the foreign graduate students. With the saturation of demand for Americans with doctorates around 1970, the best American students proved their superior abilities by reading the handwriting on the wall, and they began to choose other lines of work. In the meantime, however, the golden age had produced an unprecedented degree of genuine excellence in research and graduate education. Almost unnoticed, the declining number of American students was replaced by an increasing number of foreign students.

Now, another twenty years later, our entire system of education

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reminds me of what I suppose the Soviet industry to have been like before perestroika and subsequent events. Like the education we offer, the goods the Soviets turned out were shabby and ill fitting, but at least they were for everyone. Just so, we educate everyone, rather poorly, and the education we offer in the sciences is the worst of all. Nevertheless, we have a special line of scientific goods so superior—like certain Russian caviars and vodkas—that it competes successfully in world markets. We have kept the momentum of excellent graduate education going for twenty years after the growth curve saturated by straining to the limit America's ability to absorb Ph.D.'s and by exporting the rest.

The generally sorry state of American pre-graduate education brings us back to the matter of the pipeline. To view the American system of education as a leaky pipeline misses the point rather badly. To produce Ph.D.'s is not, and should not be, its purpose. Its purpose is to produce citizens who are sufficiently educated to participate in a Jeffersonian democracy, and possibly even to contribute to our economic well-being. These things it does not do very well, and it does them most poorly of all in the sciences. To cite just one example among many of the consequences of that failure, the vast majority of the country seems to have believed without question President Reagan's 1983 promise that an impenetrable shield against missile attack could be built in space. All scientifically literate people knew that the promise was fraudulent, but that is a tiny fraction of the populace.

There remains a strange enigma to explain. How can such a poor system of education continue to produce the best graduate students and the best scientists in the world? (It may also produce the best scholars and the best poets—I'm not in a position to know that.) Traveling abroad, one cannot help but be impressed by the broad culture and demanding education received by university-bound students elsewhere compared to the lamentable state of our own freshmen. Yet, young Americans catch up with the rest of the world at about the second year of graduate school (this is certainly true in physics, at least), after which they are second to none. How do these selected students manage not to leak out of the pipeline?

The answer, it seems to me, is that they are carefully selected. The system is not a leaky pipeline, but rather a series of filters designed to reject those who do not qualify. The teaching of physics (just to take an example) in American colleges is a dreary business, depressing to students and professors alike, except for the hand-picked few who are groomed to become professionals. Once the professor recognizes a diamond-in-the-rough, ready to be cut and polished into a brilliant gem just like himself, education becomes exhilarating and successful. I rather imagine something similar happens in many other fields, and at all

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earlier levels of education. This is the way we have rescued elitism from the jaws of democracy. College in America may be for the masses, but the superior graduate school is still for the chosen few.

The number of Ph.D.'s in America did not stop growing in the last two decades. However, instead of two doublings as predicted by Price's exponential growth curve, there has been only one. There are twice as many academic researchers in America today as there were in 1970. Federal support for scientific research in the universities (corrected for inflation) has also doubled during that period. That of course is no mere coincidence. I would predict that we will always have just enough Ph.D.'s to absorb whatever research funds are available. The painful condition of the university researcher that Lederman writes about is very real—and it had better be. It's the only mechanism that limits our Ph.D. production. To be sure, the generation of professors that came to maturity during the boom years 1950–1970 will start retiring in this decade. Thus, a superficial analysis indicates that there will be empty classrooms to fill once that starts happening. Don't believe it. Just the hint that academic posts may become available in a few years has already caused graduate enrollment by American students to increase sharply in the last year or two. The looming shortage of professors is one problem we really don't have to worry about.

Americans should be proud of our role as the world's principal source of culture and learning in the sciences. The students who come here to learn from us enrich our lives and contribute energy, ingenuity, and ideas to our research. Nevertheless, there is another way to view all this. Foreign graduate students in the sciences (and engineering and mathematics) generally receive a stipend, either to do research towards their own degrees, or to teach, which they often do poorly because their English is imperfect. In addition, their tuition is usually either heavily subsidized or waived entirely. The American taxpayer (both state and federal) is supporting extremely expensive research universities whose main educational purpose is to train students from abroad. When these students finish their educations, they either stay here, taking relatively high-paying jobs that could have gone to Americans, or they go home, taking our knowledge and our technology with them.

The American research universities are currently in a dither because Congress has discovered an interest in indirect cost payments on federal research grants and contracts, an issue so arcane it confuses even the experts (I'm one of them). Congress and the public doesn't seem yet to have noticed that, while largely ignoring our own students, we are putting our money and our best talent into training our economic competitors. Just wait until this one hits the fan.

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The Biographer and the Angel

HERBERT MARDER

But the dead, thought Lily, encountering some obstacle in her design which made her pause and ponder, stepping back a foot or so, oh, the dead! she murmured, one pitied them, one brushed them aside, one had even a little contempt for them. They are at our mercy.
Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*

ONE MORNING MY WIFE AND I were lingering after breakfast and the conversation turned to biographies—why does anyone write them and why do people read them? I say it's a search for identity, remembering one's cultural parents. My wife says it's having an imaginary playmate: the biographer, a very lonely and isolated person, recreates someone else's life in great detail, getting involved in another world, living and breathing it. A novelist does that, too, in a sense. But, I say, the difference between them resembles the difference between a child and a parent. A fictional character is a child of the writer's imagination, and a biographical subject is an external authority, like a parent.

In this age of psychobiography, when everything has been mapped and opened to inspection, from Luther's identity crisis to Joyce's coprophilia, the biographer has escaped serious analysis, using objectivity as a cover, blending, like a nesting quail, into the dense underbrush of documents, transcripts, and commentaries. Winnowing these millions of words, so it seems, the writer must dismiss personal motives and efface him- or herself in order to survive. Although the biographer's feelings about the subject are decisive, his work is often treated as if it involved no more than refining raw information and elaborating a style—the messenger's self merging silently, unobtrusively, with the message. As Virginia Woolf reminded a friend, we inevitably endow others with our own feelings and intentions. "Do we then know nobody? Only our own versions of them, which, as likely as not, are emanations from ourselves."

The impulse to write biography came for me at a late stage, after years

✪ HERBERT MARDER, associate professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is the author of *Feminism and Art: A Study of Virginia Woolf.*

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of preoccupation with Virginia Woolf's work. Telling her life story, I realized, was intertwined with my own remembrance of things past, and that, in turn, led to "bio-autographical" speculations about the biographer's personal history and how it influences the choice of a subject.

Years ago, in my student days, a woman who later became a Jungian analyst egged me on to write a thesis on Virginia Woolf. "Come on," she said, "dig the bisexual lesbian wordplay, I mean, tell us what's going on in that room of one's own." Whereupon my eyes were opened. Virginia Woolf's reputation then, in the early sixties, was at a low point and perhaps due to make a comeback. I had read her for pleasure—she was one of my favorite writers—so naturally I'd overlooked the possibility of mining her books for a thesis topic. Women and fiction—it was then an uncluttered field, without the sludge that encrusted Yeats and Eliot.

My adviser at Columbia puffed judiciously on his unlit pipe while considering my thesis subject. "Not much mileage in feminism these days," he said. "Virginia Woolf was not a political animal. She was a lady, you know—disliked workingmen, Negroes, and Jews."

"There are subversive, radical ideas all over her books," I said.

He puffed decisively. "E. M. Forster says she was a snob and proud of it—a true Brit. I think you should go ahead."

So it was settled. The thesis, which described Woolf's war against her conditioning as an upper-middle-class lady, was finished and defended around the time my wife, Norma, was giving birth to our second son; I published it in the late sixties, at the beginning of the Bloomsbury revival. Then, in 1972, Quentin Bell's biography of Virginia Woolf transformed the portrait of the artist I had carried in my mind. I hadn't known the contents of her letters and diaries, which confirmed the subversiveness of the novels. There was now a dense penumbra of previously unpublished writings offering a richness of detail one couldn't guess at—an unknown Virginia. Through the years that figure gained in complexity, became stranger and more familiar, more like a person one had actually known, still remaining elusive, two steps ahead of me, in spite of the critical essays I wrote trying to regain lost ground. I sometimes thought my interest in Virginia Woolf had something to do with my mother, who picked up after her sons and never asked them to do housework, who had been so radical politically and so conservative domestically—savoring the coming revolution while she kept us going with her skilled piecework, sewing necks on cashmere sweaters in Popper's sweatshop.

Recently a sudden illness, stirring up old memories, brought me a new awareness of having been, like Virginia, an abandoned child. That she united in one person, as I saw it, the magisterial artist and the

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vulnerable outsider had great appeal. Virginia's mother died when she was thirteen, leaving her in the care of her father, Leslie Stephen, a formidable and much-admired man of letters, an engaging figure whom she lived up to, proving throughout her own literary career that she was indeed her father's daughter. But the widowed Leslie Stephen had grown increasingly deaf and irascible. Though he warmly encouraged Virginia's literary and intellectual interests, he was oblivious to her emotional turmoil. There was no help or guidance for her, no protection against the shameful, illicit embraces of her older half-brother, George, no release from sexual guilt and confusion. Later, as an adult struggling to come to terms with being abandoned, she became "obsessed" with her parents, those powerful elders who had failed to protect her, as if, by incorporating their ghostly presences into her own personality, she could reverse or mitigate their dereliction.

I thought of my own confusion at the age of thirteen, when Mama grew ill with cancer. In that year I began writing for the first time—small incestuous stories, and a long metaphysical murder mystery. I was more or less on my own. Papa, who was old enough to be my grandfather, worked in a stockbroker's office. In the evenings he played for two-dollar stakes at the chess club and also did a little business that involved carrying around thick wads of other people's cash. He came home late at night, patted my head affectionately, and told me to go to bed soon. Mama lingered on, in and out of the hospital, until I was seventeen—it was a long, cruel death. Perhaps Virginia's struggle with her parents' legacy was a diversion for me, absorbing some of my anxiety as I struggled with my own ghosts.

In January 1931, at the age of forty-nine, Virginia spoke to a gathering of professional women about her career and her attempts to kill the Angel in the House. The Angelic ideal, described in a well-known Victorian sequence of poems, was synonymous with sexual stereotypes that were still dominant in the thirties. Virtuous women, according to the myth, lived in an almost disembodied state, ethereally rising above animal lusts and dedicating their lives to the welfare of the family. During her youth, Virginia said, in the last days of Victoria's reign, every middle-class household had a resident Angel—she was as much a fixture as drapes and sideboard. In spite of her moral radiance, she was a practical body and did her domestic chores with great efficiency, which was most convenient for the Master of the House. Virginia's verdict on this character was scathing and compassionate. The Angel, she maintained, "was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there

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was a draught she sat in it—in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all—need I say it—she was pure."

Humor softens the indictment, but Virginia's anger pervades this sad catalogue of virtues. The spurious ideal had haunted her youth, for it was her parents' Angel. They had adopted its values and accepted the unequal roles it prescribed because "a real relationship between men and women was then unattainable." The Angel had infected their lives with unreality. In some ways the falseness became worse after Julia Stephen's death, in the first year of Virginia's adolescence. Leslie had used the myth of his wife's divinity as a weapon against his three daughters, insisting that there should always be an Angel and that one of them must inherit the job. Virginia was appalled by the self-pity that turned this man, who could be so sensitive, into a crude bully, blind to other people's feelings. After her father's death, the Angel had become even more insidious, trying to smother her with its conventional wisdom, to prevent her from thinking and writing freely—an outrage against which she violently rebelled. "I turned upon her and caught her by the throat," she told her listeners. "I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be had up in a court of law, would be that I acted in self-defense."

This ironic vignette hardly suggests the length and bitterness of her struggle, which persisted through most of her career and culminated with her effort to recreate the past in *To the Lighthouse*. There she reconstructed the world of her childhood and drew vivid portraits of her parents in order to loosen the hold they still had on her. "I used to think of him and mother daily," she noted in her diary. "I was obsessed by them both unhealthily; & writing of them was a necessary act." The novel helped dispel her nostalgia, but the Angel, being ectoplasmic, kept coming back to life, for "it is far harder to kill a phantom than a reality." And the phantom put on subtle disguises. Virginia's next book, a fantastic biography of her friend Vita Sackville-West, was a kind of ghost sonata. The story of Orlando, who lives for three hundred years and goes through a sex change halfway through, is simultaneously a chronicle of English literature and a love token. The hero/heroine's transformation from man to woman reflects the absorption of Virginia's father's ghost into the body of her lesbian lover. *Orlando*'s subversive inner logic suggests: my father (represented by the English classics, which I learned to love from him) and my lover (the aristocratic writer descended from Elizabethan nobles) inhabit one bisexual body—therefore my father is my lover.

Three years later, looking ahead to a new decade after completing *The Waves*, an austere novel depicting her own circle of friends, Virginia

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announced with some confidence that the Angel was dead at last. She would now enter a phase in which she created chronicles without nostalgia—juxtaposing Victorian and modern times, observing how the domestic tyranny of the former led to the political fanaticism of the latter. Her writings throughout the thirties celebrated freedom in an age of concentration camps. Finally, after finishing *Between the Acts*, her most liberated book—but without allowing herself time for a final revision—she committed suicide. It is an ambiguous ending, leaving a question for survivors: What had killed her—was it the Angel reviving under cover of war to renew its malevolent demands?

Two years ago, hoping for an answer, I began writing a biography of Virginia beginning with 1931, when she completed *The Waves*, to 1941, when she drowned. It was to be a book about her life after the Angel—a subject that made me increasingly aware of my own ghosts.

I remember visiting Ewing Memorial Hospital on an early spring day forty years ago: the antiseptic corridors of the cancer ward, the gleam of polished floors, and then Mama in her hospital gown, sitting up in bed, withdrawn into herself. I feel her sunken eyes looking at me and hear the plaintive, ironic voice, the bitterness that lies behind her words, her last words to me—words that have stayed with me as her last. I am her pampered boy—at seventeen the baby of the family, the shining light. And now what is being asked of me? I suffer a mute, stubborn inner rebellion as she speaks—unsure of what I'm feeling, how to act. A vertigo. I'm almost stupefied, angry, unable to break out of the web of expectations.

Her life was stolen from her, Mama says. Only yesterday she was growing up in Brzezany—another world, the Austrian empire before the First World War. "I was a little girl, helping in my father's shop—it was such a store where people could buy the newspaper and soap and shoes also. Imagine—my hair was made into a long pigtail, and I was reaching up to the shelf for candies. You know, I am not . . . I have not been a very good person—I was an envious child. It was so—there were girls in the school who dressed very nicely, they would wear beautiful dresses, they had blouses with ribbons and laces, and mother was dressing me in such plain clothes. These girls were snobbish, they were more grown-up than the others. I wanted to be friendly with them, but it was out of the question; they were avoiding me."

It is as if no time has passed since she was that little girl, she says; her youth went by in a flash. She had a voice and dreamed of studying at a conservatory and being a singer. She loved beautiful things, art, music, the opera—and married Papa to escape and move to Vienna, and that too was a disappointment. Papa neglected her; he was traveling all the time,

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and he went to the chess club and left her alone every night with the children. She was a neglected wife. Only one of all her wishes came true—"I wanted two sons and I had them. The one joy that was given to me in life"—she shakes her head sardonically. "Such a blessing I had. And now this . . . joke from God." Those ambiguous words referring to me, "the one joy," words so eroded away by bitterness and love—not literally her last words, but the last I remember, imprinting their implacable logic. She was saying: Don't let me die, I never had a chance, I'm still that foolish girl—give me room, find a place within yourself where I can live still, live in your life. It's for you, you bear the responsibility.

And I didn't mourn properly.

The two or three years after her death are a rift, a chasm in my life. I became a different person who acted and thought and talked differently. I felt myself split—one self sliding over another, without a face to show the world. My double self appeared in nightmares—a gray face behind the door's glass panel, an evil presence in the rustling forest. Meeting friends and strangers in cafeterias or bars, my face would begin to shiver and twitch uncontrollably. I would escape into the night air.

But recreating Mama as a guide and critic within myself gave me a new mask, a way of shaping chaos. She was hidden within me, a shadow from which I drew sustenance—no longer a distinct image. I couldn't see her. She was like an infusion in my veins, always present and invisible.

Telling the story of Virginia's last years concentrated my attention on the 1930s, an era that included the year when I was born in Vienna while workers and Fascists fought pitched battles in the street. Oh, I thought, for a voice with which to render her seductive mind, a voice that would engage the intelligent reader. I imagined friends listening to me, ironic, smiling women, but their images were thin and insubstantial—I didn't know them. But one day a dim figure emerged from the shadows, a listener who responded to every subtle nuance—Mama, as I had last seen her in the cancer ward, her personality still half-hidden, vaguely remembered—I could say everything to her, only she declined all heaviness, urging that I should step lightly, thoughts and sentences flowing with an easy rhythm. My writing should be simpler and less stilted. So I had direct communication with Mama, who was an ambiguous figure, clear-eyed and ethereal.

Of Mama's last years, what stands out now is her bitterness, but the listener for whom I wrote those trial chapters of the biography was a sympathetic, intelligent companion, without bitterness. Emotionally, I experienced her bright, Angelic side and blocked out the bad feelings. Her days in the cancer ward made no difference—Mama came back to

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me as a calm, happy woman, even on her deathbed. Our memories of feelings, I think, are even more selective than our memories of events.

This picture of Mama evokes an earlier time before her illness, when she was reading Karen Horney's book on self-analysis. She was then an intrepid woman with whom I sat in the rear of the City Center balcony, craning at the doll-like figures of Violetta and Alfredo on the stage below, their tragedy floating up to us in a thin stream of song. I remember a later day, when Mama's cancer was in remission; we were walking home from the Lane Theatre after seeing *The Major and the Minor* with Ray Milland and Ginger Rogers—a bright Sunday afternoon on St. Nicholas Avenue. I am lecturing her on working-class art and popular culture—being such a prig, so blandly arrogant, that Mama breaks into laughter and catches my arm. "Now I know the meaning of what people are writing about callow youth," she says. A memory of light and laughter—that is the Mama who came back to me—though in fact her last years were filled with grievances and lamentations.

Then perhaps my effort to understand Virginia's life was also flawed and unreliable—as emotionally slanted as my encounters with Mama's ghost?

I had no such doubts while I was writing, though, enjoying a sense of getting close to my subject, which is one of the pleasures of biography. But the story had a darker side. Mama's re-emergence, the image of her in the cancer ward, was not only a guide to authenticity, but a reminder that soon, on my fifty-fourth birthday, I would be as old as she was when she died. I pondered two snapshots of her framed in lucite on my desk. Then a few weeks before my birthday I felt a pain somewhere in my groin or stomach. The doctor, after a routine check-up, found an ambiguous spot on one of the X rays. . . . Mama's snapshots on the desk looked back at me indifferently. After the doctor's call—how cheerful his telephone voice sounded—I glimpsed the end of my life in the bathroom mirror. I thought I had cancer; I would fall asleep as she did and not wake up again. I felt that a reckoning had been entered and carried forward from the time when I did not mourn. I went back to work, immersed myself in writing about Virginia, who had felt "nothing whatever" after her mother's death. ("George took us down to say goodbye," she wrote of that event. "My father staggered from the bedroom as we came. I stretched out my arms to stop him, but he brushed past me, crying out something I could not catch; distraught.") Morbid thoughts enveloped me like a sheath, hardening into a deceptive calm, into which the doctor's second call, giving me a clean bill of health, intruded almost as an anticlimax. It was not going to be cancer.

A few days later I woke at three in the morning after a belated birthday party. Some malevolence had been working, a tube secretly

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inserted through my skull, a jet of molten liquid streaming fanwise from the base of my brain, scalding its own path. At the hospital they found blood between the brain and the arachnoid membrane—a hemorrhage that could cause death or paralysis. I lay sniffing oxygen, fortified with doses of Demerol and Decadron. Several hours of tests showed that the burst vein or pica had clotted and repaired itself almost at once, leaving me physically reduced but neurologically unimpaired. No sign of where the break had been, the repair had worked and was invisible to their instruments. "A weak spot," the doctor said, "probably there from birth—waiting to go off like a time bomb. Medically speaking you're healthier now than before it happened."

For weeks I was volatile, sleepless, invaded by manic enthusiasms—I craved Lewis Carroll, Gilbert and Sullivan, and Brahms, whose works reduced me to childlike laughter in the small hours of the morning. My nervous energy fell off steeply towards exhaustion.

The following summer, after many fallow months, I tried to pick up the Virginia Woolf biography where I had left off. One day, having put my notes in order and sketched a chronology, struggling to make up the opening lines of a new chapter in my head and resume the dialogue with Mama, I came to a full stop, facing a blank stillness—she was gone. Her absence was palpable; nothing stirred, not a whisper. This happened at our summer home in Maine; I was walking through the woods towards the sea along a trail I had walked a hundred times before. The silence within was complete. I did not know how to go on writing, for without Mama's friendly oversight, I had lost my voice.

On February 7, 1931, two weeks after her speech about the Angel in the House, Virginia wrote the final pages of *The Waves*. Between those two dates, on January 25, she celebrated her forty-ninth birthday, reaching the age her mother had been when she died of rheumatic fever. While preparing *The Waves* for publication, she suffered from unusually long and severe bouts of literary postpartum depression, being laid up on and off throughout 1931, sometimes for weeks at a time. Late in the year she noted in her diary how crucial the novel was for her future development. "Oh yes, between 50 & 60 I think I shall write out some very singular books, if I live. I mean I think I am about to embody, at last, the exact shapes my brain holds. What a long toil to reach this beginning—if *The Waves* is my first work in my own style!" Virginia had shed the lyrical, elegiac mood of her earlier writing, which was the counterpart of her struggle with the Angel. The tone of *The Waves*, a severely intellectual novel in the form of "soliloquies," is both harsher and more elevated than that of her fiction in the twenties. Presenting six friends in a group portrait, not as conventional characters but as distinct phases of

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a single "complete human being," Virginia implied a wish to renounce the personal self, a desire for egoless anonymity. (The first chapter of a literary history headed "Anon" was among her papers when she died.) At times she expressed a Swiftian contempt for the human race, adopting the lupine, predatory style suggested by her married surname. The two opposing sides of Virginia—Woolf/Anon—escaped at last like genies from a bottle. Both sides, anger and renunciation, run through all her work of the 1930s—the wolfish satire and the absolute vision no longer softened by charm, no longer linking her to the adolescent "Ginny," her father's daughter.

She had crossed a line. Her complicated history after the Angel was the biographical subject I had chosen when I still had to cross my own line. After my brain hemorrhage, which seemed inseparable from my need to expel Mama, I asked myself this question: Having lived so long with her ghost, having formed my adult personality on the presence of that maternal critic, what would happen now that I was older than she had ever been? (I imagined Mama growing smaller in the distance behind me.) So my decision to write biography was a personal reflex, set off by the need to view my own past through the lens of Virginia Woolf's life. And fuller awareness of that fact would inevitably color what I wrote in the future.

Painting is one of the first languages, informed by rhythmic gestures, unifying hand and eye. Sometimes, when I am jaded with words, I submerge myself in the rituals of cutting paper and mixing colors. Free of an insistent inner babble, I concentrate on dancelike brush strokes and swirling pigment in water, counting time by the rate at which the paper dries. One rainy day last summer, when my writing stalled, I cut four rectangular sheets of watercolor paper and painted on them four simple geometrical figures—squares rotated and balancing on their points, diamond shapes—although the last figure came out compressed and rounded into a pouting lozenge. I filled in the space around each diamond with a light-colored wash—the act of painting as slow and deliberate as a breathing exercise—coloring the backgrounds, but leaving an unpainted outline round each figure: mottled diamonds haloed by white paper.

On a walk the following morning, stepping around lichen-spotted roots and stones, I realized that the paintings had placed my writing problem in a new perspective. The diamond-shaped figures were abstract and real, geometrical symbols and painted artifacts. They referred to unstoried, abstract forms, warning me away from the image of Mama and the personal voice that I had been trying to recover, directing me toward the realm of anonymity. But while avoiding an overly personal

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tone, my style would still reflect awareness of the figure receding behind me. Those diamonds, I thought as I tramped through mud and thickets, represent the life story's inner form, like cells of the honeycomb or Virginia's waves, which are both abstraction and reality—multiple images, folded and overlaid on each other, as in the original draft of *The Waves*, where she pictured "many mothers, like one wave succeeding another."

That novel, Virginia told a friend, was "completely opposed to the tradition of fiction. . . . I am writing to a rhythm and not to a plot." All writing, she said, is nothing but "putting words on the backs of rhythm."

I began writing the biography again, choosing a theme or motive and following it through the chapter from point to point, as if unfolding the collapsed implications of an idea. As my four painted panels were faces of one diamond, one polyptych—so Virginia's statement about writing to a rhythm, not a plot, refracted different meanings from a single core: her revolt against the "masculine" sentence and Victorian conventions; her habit of composing sentences on long daily walks (the love of walking inherited from her alpinist father); and her use of the walking motive as a formal element in her fiction. I thought of figures repeated with variations through a narrative like the figures of a measured dance and kept a changing polygon in mind as I wrote, using that device as a guide, seeing biographical episodes as variations of underlying motives.

I entered in my journal:

> Mama wants me to continue her life and impress her feelings on everything. The geometrical figures cut through the haze of personality, which charms and distorts.
>
> This morning, on the walk back from Calf Cove, I repeated two things to myself over and over again: You've known it all along; and, The truth is just the opposite of what you thought it was.
>
> Consequences of my hemorrhage: a personality change, reversing the direction taken thirty-seven years ago after her death. Because her presence was strong, the struggle to expel her made me bleed.
>
> Virginia once went this way—her parents' ghosts dwindling behind her, an abandoned child finally abandoning guilt and inhibitions at forty-nine. So in writing about the last years of her life, I am vicariously sharing the journey with her.

Mama in the snapshots on my desk is a plain, pug-nosed woman of fifty—her eyes slightly sunk in their sockets, her shoulder-length hair waved in the style of 1950s movies. Her two poses are different: the first preserves her smiling, sideways glance, fingers perched coquettishly on her breastbone; the second, a frontal shot, reveals observant hooded eyes and the shadows of folds around her chin.

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There must be correspondences, I thought on the trail to Calf Cove, between the biographer and the subject, some vital common interest—or how could one write a life? The task is to approach one's subject as closely as possible without identifying with her; to respect her otherness, finding the core motives that appear in many variations and yet are always the same. Resting at a point halfway between intimacy and distance, we will neither imagine that the dead are at our mercy nor allow their ghosts to tyrannize us.

In an unfinished memoir written for her niece shortly before her death, Virginia was still exorcising her ghosts. Her visionary thoughts on personal identity symbolize the limits one may approach, but not reach, in biography. She believed that there is a pattern underlying the shapeless "cotton wool" of daily life, that we can glimpse it at privileged moments, conceiving the whole world as a work of art and apprehending ourselves as part of the work of art. "*Hamlet* or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself." Her insistence that "there is no God" reflects her fight against patriarchal authority and, implicitly, against fascism. We have betrayed our cultural parents, she says, by turning them into idols, flat conventional pillars of society—and worse. During the 1930s she repeatedly denied the existence of "Virginia Woolf," the eminent public figure, who was a figment invented by the guardians of the status quo for their own ends. There had once been a William but "Shakespeare" and "Beethoven" did not exist—they were Angels. Years ago, I thought, I had been visited by images called "Virginia Woolf" and "Mama" who came bearing swords.

Some biographers know before they begin just what they want to say and how to say it. I am not one of them. Behind every Angel stands some personal ghost, and the deceptions of the subject's selective memory, coupled with the biographer's selective memory, are at times disheartening. I progress from one episode to another and phase to phase, as if through a labyrinth, guessing at meanings, stripping away concealments where I can, hoping without any assurance of success to arrive at "the thing itself."

The biographer can reveal a historical figure's own designs, sound the person's self-creating motives without fictionalizing or embroidering the facts, and, by doing so, foster the awareness, as Virginia says, "that we are the music."

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Vienna in New Orleans, 1940

EDGAR KOERNER

As newcomers, they'd come to our home
as if wading in from a shipwreck,
those few Viennese who, like us, somehow
washed up in New Orleans.
How compulsively
they'd tell of their flights:
one country, *any* country, at a time,
each with its precious but expiring visa,
already ticking when grudgingly issued;
the mobbed passport bureaus—lawyers
and doctors pushing and screaming;
the bribe-hungry clerks, canceled sailings,
lost steamer trunks, lost cousins;
and I,
on the floor with my new board games,
would listen, well aware of the roles
played by chance and by luck—roll four:
advance to Morocco; roll two: pay 5000 francs
for a forged visa; roll ten: end up
in New Orleans in one furnished room
under a slow ceiling fan.
I remember
a Saturday afternoon, they all came,
the newcomers' German a counterpoint jarring
the regulars' careful copybook English.
I see them with sweat glazing most faces,
wearing their beautifully tailored heavy wool
Viennese clothes, evidence offered—
to streetcar conductors? each other?
themselves?—that they'd been people
of means, of importance.
Just before two,
they drifted to the chairs, a semi-circle
facing the floor-model Philco,

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their talk now subdued, an audience murmur,
as if the houselights were dimming again,
as if there were no Milton Cross,
no Texaco ad.
Once the opera began,
they sat back, mostly silent,
except for the sighing, and soon stared hard
at the white ceiling, and I wonder now
what appeared up there—the view
from their seats at the *Staatsoper*?
the usual table, after the opera,
across the street, in the Sacher Café?
or outside, all along the *Ringstrasse*,
the new, draped, billowing shrouds
of swastika flags?
At the last curtain,
they all just sat there,
and, for a while, none of them talked;
when they did, it all came out German;
but most left without saying much.

✪ EDGAR KOERNER teaches creative writing in New York under a Children's Aid Society program. His poems have recently appeared in the *Southern Review*, *New Letters*, and *Poetry East*.

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Destruction

E.M. SCHORB

In Florida a hurricane
came off the sea and
razed the town of
Homestead, in which
town lived a little
boy, in a mobile home,
a single-wide, on wheels,
whose hobby it was, he
told the reporter,
to build houses out of
cards. His mother worked,
his father had died, he
had no sister or brother,
no other, so when he came
home from school, second
grade, he would stack
cards, most beautifully,
the reporter gathered, up and up
and into the most wonderful
designs, so wonderful, he
said, that his mother
had photographed some of
his houses made of cards
(but the photos had been
blown away by the storm—
as well as everything else).
The boy said he could
stack some more, and
didn't care, his talent
remained, but frowned
and said, amazingly,
that he felt sorry
for the wind.

✪ E. M. SCHORB is the author of three collections of poetry, *The Poor Boy and Other Poems*, *Like the Fall of Rome and Other Humanitarian Disasters*, and *50 Poems*.

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Herbert Hoover Meets Adolf Hitler

JOHN LUKACS

On Tuesday, the eighth of March in 1938, an eminent American was to meet Adolf Hitler in Berlin. At noon, accompanied by the American Ambassador to Germany (Hugh Wilson), they walked out from a big Berlin hotel, through the gloomy magnificence of its hall, with its dark wood panels gleaming, lit by a hundred lights coruscating in the cut-glass chandeliers. As they stepped outside, there was the sudden relief of the northern light, with sunshine breaking through.

The Reich Chancellery was only a few minutes away by car. The new Reich Chancellery, designed by Albert Speer, was being built, but the old Chancellery, too, carried the marks of the new era. Above the marble jambs and the lintel framing the huge door leading to the Chancellor's office, the initials *A H* were carved into the marble transom.

The eminent American was Herbert Hoover. He had arrived in Berlin the night before. He was driven in an automobile across mid-Germany from Prague. He was impressed with what he saw, the splendid new highways, the new housing, and the general prosperity in the German towns and villages. He began his conversation with Hitler by "expressing his admiration" for the many evidences of German prosperity and order, the "very hopeful, live atmosphere everywhere in Germany." Statements such as these must not be misunderstood in retrospect. They were proper for a foreign guest to begin his conversation with a head of state. Their conversation then went on, for about an hour.

Hitler did most of the talking. He talked well, not at all like a dictator or a fanatic. He was self-assured, his arguments were well planned out in advance. Save at the end, most of the topics of the two men concerned housing, employment, investment, agriculture, the German leisure program for workers. It is interesting how Hitler, who had often attacked capitalism as well as Communism, capitalists as well as communists, used a different language when speaking to Hoover. Before National Socialism assumed power, Hitler said, "the menacing prospect of Communism had an extraordinarily deterrent effect on capitalists. . . . As against all this, National Socialism had created a new security and stability of conditions, and in particular, security for the private capitalist, while at the same time certain justified social demands had immediately been satisfied by the government without Labor having to exercise pressure."

All of this was well calculated to impress Hoover, whose admiration for the new Germany was sincere. At the same time the former president felt compelled to emphasize that his country was different: America was "following with great interest the course of the German experiment, which in many respects diverged from the American views on economic and other matters." Albeit briefly, he returned to the theme twice during the conversation. While "the world must look with admiration at the results achieved in Germany," he said, "American problems were, however, different ones. One was so permeated by the liberal economic attitude in America that it would be impossible to build up so perfect an organization as quickly as in Germany." When Hitler emphasized that he had been democratically elected, and that he ex-

✪ JOHN LUKACS is the author of two recent books: *The Duel* and *The End of the Twentieth Century and the End of the Modern Age.*

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ercised power with the expressed support of the people, Hoover briefly replied that "in America one must have such regard for spiritual and intellectual freedom that any restrictive measures such as had been adopted in Germany would not be possible there." At that point Hitler shifted the talk to the dangers of Communism with which Hoover largely agreed.

Because of the above-mentioned brief and courteous exchanges of opinion—for that was what they were—a minor controversy arose that Ambassador Wilson thought necessary to smooth out as well as to explain in his dispatch to Washington. The manager of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Paul C. Smith, accompanied the ex-president on his European trip. He hoped to accompany Hoover on his visit to Hitler. The German Foreign Ministry refused that, one of the reasons being that Smith's newspaper "had been bitterly critical of the present regime in Germany." Subsequently Smith talked to two American journalists about the Hoover-Hitler meeting, with the result that at least one of them (Pierre Huss of the International News Service) reported that "a clash occurred between Mr. Hoover and the Chancellor over the issue of democracy versus totalitarianism." Hugh Wilson immediately advised the Department of State that "there was nothing in the nature of a 'clash' in the interview." "Mr. Hoover, in questioning the Chancellor about conditions in Germany, frequently stated the American attitude and conceptions of dealing with certain economic and social problems, but in no way expressed any criticism of the German Government. The Chancellor listened attentively to those remarks, occasionally stating that conditions were so different in Germany as to require methods and procedures other than those which would be effective in the United States." The substance of this early dispatch by the Ambassador was then confirmed by the extensive memorandum of the German official translator who recorded the Hitler-Hoover conversation in detail.

After their return from the Chancellery, Hugh Wilson gave a lunch for Hoover at the Hotel Esplanade, with high German officials and three foreign ambassadors present. That evening the Carl Schurz Society ("under close control of the German government," Hugh Wilson reported), which had arranged Hoover's visit to Berlin, gave a dinner honoring the former president. The main speaker was Hjalmar Schacht, the economic wizard of the Third Reich, whose round creased face over a high round collar resembled the American visitor's somewhat. Schacht praised Hoover's political record effusively. It was a "tragedy" that this great American "had not been able to fulfill all his great plans" because of the Depression. Schacht added that it was his personal conviction that Hoover's political career would resume and continue. The next day Göring gave a fabulous luncheon for Hoover at his opulent country estate, featuring heralds sounding fanfares in medieval German costumes, an enormous host of servants, silk-stockinged and bewigged waiters, one standing behind each guest. Hoover was somewhat startled, though not unimpressed with Göring. He was more at home with the German industrialists and financiers who kept calling at his hotel suite later in the afternoon. Next morning, March 10, Hoover left for Warsaw, another stop on his European journey, at a comfortable hour of departure. It was a pleasant morning, with many German well-wishers, bouquets of flowers on the platform under the smoke rising to the iron vaulting and the glass dome of a large Berlin railway station.

There has been—perhaps surprisingly—little or no interest by historians in this meeting of Hoover with Hitler. Even in specialized works dealing with American-German relations of that period one hardly finds any mention of it at all. Yet—at least in this historian's view—there are two significant matters connected with that event: one, perhaps short-range, involving the Third Reich and Europe at a very critical moment that happened to coincide with Hoover's visit; the other, surely long-range, involving American political history, particularly that of the Republican Party, ever since.

The three days of Herbert Hoover's presence in Berlin coincided with a great crisis that Hitler had to face, a milestone in his career and in the history of Europe. He was on the verge of deciding whether to march into Austria, or to enforce the Nazification of Austria by other means. That was the first time that he would change the map of Europe,

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moving across frontiers, conquering or incorporating a neighboring independent country. He had put all kinds of pressures on Austria during the previous weeks. But on the very day he met Hoover, Hitler became informed that the Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg was about to thwart his plans by a desperate move. From their Austrian Nazi agents and spies in Vienna, Hitler and Göring learned what Schuschnigg was about to do. He would announce that a plebiscite would be held the coming Sunday, when the Austrian people would confirm the principle of their country's independence. In sum, he would steal a march on Hitler. By the morning of the ninth, both Hitler and Göring knew exactly what was up, and that they had to act, and quick. That none of this had filtered through to Hoover and his party, or indeed to the American Embassy, is not surprising. What is remarkable is Hitler's and Göring's composure: the genial hosts, in complete self-control, finding plenty of time to receive and to impress their American guest. As a matter of fact, Göring's luncheon had not been included in Hoover's original itinerary. This is particularly interesting, because the architect of the annexation of Austria was Göring. On the eleventh—the day after Hoover's departure from Berlin—Göring took over Austria by telephone. His calls from Berlin to Vienna, threatening an invasion (in reality the first German troops did not cross the frontier until another day) made the government of Austria cancel the plebiscite and then resign. In the memorandum written by Hoover's confidant and assistant after Hoover's return from Europe, the ex-president is quoted as having said that he had foreseen the Anschluss. He blamed the French for having blocked a German-Austrian union in 1931.

More interesting is the circumstance that the Hoover visit to Germany came in 1938, a year that was a turning point in American-German relations. Hoover's repeated praises of German efficiency and prosperity should not be misinterpreted. He was not alone in being impressed by the Third Reich in early 1938. That was before some of the worst excesses of Nazi rule had become wide public knowledge. Before 1938 there were many Americans who were inclined favorably to the new Germany, in spite (or, in some ways, because) of the barrage of news propagated about the brutalities of the Hitler regime, thinking (and in some instances that was so) that that kind of propaganda was greatly exaggerated, the product of special interests. There were important and knowledgeable people who were convinced of that, for example Truman Smith, the American military attaché in Berlin, a very intelligent army officer; and of course Charles Lindbergh (who wrote in his *Diary* four days after the Anschluss: "I cannot help liking the Germans. They are like our own people. We should be working with them and not constantly crossing swords.") Lindbergh would visit Germany after Munich when Göring gave him the Hoover treatment *plus*. Lindbergh's political inclinations did not change in 1938, while those of many Americans had, including Franklin Roosevelt, who sometime in November of 1938 began to alter—in his own way, surreptitiously and secretly—the course of the American ship of state.

Hoover emphasized to Hitler that "America was politically very distant from Europe and by no means desired to interfere in European political questions." Hitler liked to hear that. At the same time one thing about which Hitler spoke to Hoover—confident as he was of Hoover's response to it—was significant. We have seen that toward the end of their talk Hitler turned to the insidious dangers of Communism, with which Hoover largely agreed. That was a persuasive argument that Hitler used very successfully, especially in the 1930s, both within Germany and without. His insistence on the threat of Communism was a main reason why Hindenburg and the German conservatives allowed him to come to power in 1933. Throughout his life Hitler was better informed about American politics than most people are accustomed to think. He was very clever in appealing to Hoover's anti-Communism. He knew that there were many Americans who thought that Nazism and the Third Reich were less of a danger to the world than were Russia and Communism. That was indeed what Hoover believed. When he had returned to America a month later—after Hitler's conquest of Austria and his threat of war to Czechoslovakia—Hoover told his close friend and assistant Edgar Rickard, who wrote this down in his long memorandum about Hoover's European trip, that the Germans were "not prepared for offensive warfare,"

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that they had no desire for war; and, if they were to move, "they will move not West but East and South and [Hoover] feels this will do no harm for general peace, as Germans would give better government than now obtains in Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and parts of Czechoslovakia." Hoover did not consider that once the Third Reich ruled Central and Eastern Europe neither general peace nor the independence of Western Europe (and of England) would amount to much. And two years later, in 1940 (Hoover was then still a candidate for the Republican nomination) he and Taft and the isolationists and the congealing group of American Firsters were convinced that it was against the interest of the United States to assist Churchill's Britain against what by then had become Hitler's rule over Western Europe—indeed, over nearly all of the Continent.

In 1940 the Republican convention met immediately after the fall of France. Of course Churchill (whom Hoover greatly disliked) saw things very differently. I am not only thinking of Churchill's wish for the closest possible Anglo-American alliance. Eventually Churchill came around to see that Hitler's Germany was so powerful that there might be only two alternatives: either all of Europe dominated by Germany, or the eastern portion of Europe dominated by Russia; and half of Europe was better than none. Besides, Churchill believed that while the Russians might swallow much of Eastern Europe, they would not be able to digest it. But, as he said in his "Finest Hour" speech, if Hitler won, "then the whole world, including the United States, including all we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a New Dark Age, made more sinister, *and perhaps more protracted*, by the lights of a perverted science." (The italics are mine.) That was not at all what Herbert Hoover believed—not only in 1940 but throughout the rest of his long life. And this has a bearing on the political history of the United States. As a matter of fact, some of its consequences are alive even now.

In 1940 the Hooverites and the Taftites did not prevail against those other, largely Eastern and pro-British, Republicans who—with the help of some legerdemain—defeated the so-called isolationist Republicans, by nominating the anti-Nazi Wendell Willkie. In 1964, the same year that Hoover died, the Republican convention nominating Barry Goldwater all but excluded that former group from the party's leadership. In 1993, those former Eastern Republicans are all but gone. But already in 1950 the conviction that the history of the *entire* twentieth century was dominated by the issue of Communism governed the Republican Party—an interpretation of history emphatically repeated at the 1992 Republican convention by Ronald Reagan and George Bush. That ideology—for that is what it is—led to the Republicans' ascendancy, beginning with the election of 1952. Implicit within that conviction was the suggestion that Hitler and Nazism had been less of a danger to the world than were Communism and Russia; and the belief of some (seldom thus stated, but at times alluded to by such Republicans as Joe McCarthy and Pat Buchanan) that for the United States to have fought Germany in World War II was a mistake.

That Herbert Hoover had no particular sympathy for Hitler, that he believed that the American political tradition was irreconcilable with that of the Third Reich is evident from many sources, including the documentary record of his visit in Berlin. But he believed, too, that Hitler's Germany posed no real threat to the West and that it was very wrong for the United States to take sides against it. Whether Hoover ever thought that there was at least a potential conflict between these two sets of beliefs we cannot tell.

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"A soul of the old stamp"

Donald M. Frame (1911–1991)

RAYMOND C. LA CHARITÉ

I met Don Frame for the first time in September 1964. I was beginning my third year of graduate work in French literature at the University of Pennsylvania. He was the renowned Donald M. Frame, professor of French at Columbia University, and the preeminent Montaigne scholar of the day. He was fifty-three years old (my age as I write) and at the height of his scholarly powers. He had agreed to come to Penn once a week in order to teach a graduate seminar on Rabelais and the French storytellers of the Renaissance. In the spring of 1965, he returned for a seminar on Montaigne, followed by a two-semester sequence (fall 1965/spring 1966) on the major poets of the period.

At the lectern, which he left only on occasion and usually for the purpose of interacting more closely with the questioner, Donald Frame commanded instant attention. And for at least two reasons. First, there was a quiet dignity and a subtle and powerful physical magnetism to the man. One was drawn immediately to him. Second, from the word go, he was a no-nonsense instructor, fully intent upon imparting within the allotted time what he had planned on discussing that day.

To say that Frame was always prepared would be an understatement. He would never have attempted to skim a text no matter how well he knew it and no matter how many times he had taught it. His commitment to students and to the profession of teaching would not have allowed it. No matter the hour (and he would work well into the night) and no matter how tired and pressed for time he might be, he would reread a text he knew almost by heart—all of Montaigne, for example—so that in class it would be as fresh and vital to him as it could be. To have done less would have been a kind of intolerable fraud to him. He held honesty—both toward oneself and others—as the highest virtue.

Frame seldom strayed from his notes, which he carried around in a ratty old briefcase. While he didn't read his lectures as though they were scripted on a TelePrompTer, he wasn't exactly spontaneous either. His notes were elaborately structured on paper, and he would fill in the verbal gaps in such a way that, to his mind, the student would be left with the impression that he was participating in a low-key chat.

Gravity was his hallmark. He never engaged in classroom antics or flights of fancy or allowed himself to get carried away from his subject or stray into conjecture. He always spoke in a fairly soft voice, and one had to concentrate in order to catch everything. He was open to questions and commentary, but he seldom got them. When he did, he was direct and to the point and would willingly admit, if it were called for, that he did not know the answer or that the problem had not occurred to him.

He exuded reliability and depth of knowledge, not excitement and what is today called charisma, and students did not always appreciate the difference. At least not until later. He never planned to be a classroom "performer,"

✪ RAYMOND C. LA CHARITÉ is professor of French at the University of Kentucky. He has written extensively on Rabelais and Montaigne and is the editor of *French Forum* and French Forum Monographs.

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and he was never accused of being one. He saw himself as a teacher, especially of the undergraduate student, and as a forger of minds and judgment. He enjoyed linking the past with the present and unraveling the paths of tradition and authority. One could only do so much within the typical semester, and he was a stickler for appropriate coverage of whatever the subject might be. Course organization had to be precise and inclusive. The net result was that he had a tendency to "cover" the material, to spread it before the student in its amplitude, to describe the contexts and the literary products rather than spend time analyzing any one text in depth. He was comfortable with exteriors and ideas and great books; less so with interiors and literary analysis.

As a teacher, Frame did not give the appearance of being hard and exacting, but there was something about him that compelled students to do their best for him. I have always considered this a great gift. Whether it was because of his own credentials and high expectations of himself, or because of the unflappable air of steady competence about him, students just naturally wanted to excel for him. He seemed to be able to get more out of them than others. I have often thought that it was because students viewed him as a person (for some of them, as a father) whom they respected as a man and a scholar, and they simply dug deeper within themselves in order to produce exams, and especially papers, that would demonstrate their admiration. I also believe that many of them felt that it probably would not be possible to come up to his expectations, which had the happy result of pushing them to work beyond their normal level of ability and therefore to accomplish a great deal more.

For both undergraduate and graduate students, one thing about Donald Frame stood out above all else, both in the classroom and in the course of advising and private discussions. Here was a man who was not only committed to instruction and their education, but one who also took great delight in doing so and who could convey his own continuous delight with the texts and authors he handled.

He was particularly fond of undergraduate students. He prized their curiosity, interest, needs, and receptivity. Whether in class or elsewhere, and especially in his evaluation of their papers, he treated their ideas and analyses, no matter how naïve, with care and respect. Students trusted him and knew instinctively that he was challenging them with serious questions. As a result, he exercised a profound influence on their thinking, their character, and their general formation. Like Montaigne, whom he loved and revered above all other writers, Don believed that it was better to fashion young minds than to furnish them.

Through the years, he remained inspirationally involved with the Freshman Humanities and Honors Colloquium at Columbia College, a program that engaged his wide knowledge of many fields of literature and his deep love of the classics. In recognition of his influence on undergraduate students, he was granted a Great Teacher Award in 1968 by Columbia's Society of Older Graduates, and in 1975 he was appointed the Moore Collegiate Professor of French in Columbia University, an honor traditionally conferred upon someone who is deeply involved in teaching in Columbia College.

Don's unswerving dedication and sense of responsibility to students and the academic life were nowhere more clearly demonstrated than at the graduate level with his advisees and doctoral candidates in French Renaissance studies. I believe that I have known most of them, and we are all agreed that his gentle but firm guiding hand was like no other. Whatever shortcomings we might have sensed or imagined in the classroom completely vanished in the wake of his management of our doctoral work and dissertations.

Most of us approached Donald Frame on the subject of dissertation direction with some trepidation for fear he might turn us down.He didn't accept just anyone and any topic. First, he had to be convinced through previous instruction that the candidate was able to do research and write according to his standards. Second, the subject had to be one with which he was comfortable, both with regard to his own knowledge and with respect to methodology. In these matters, he was not venturesome, and he would adamantly resist being drawn into topics he considered "under conceptualized," as one friend put it, or of marginal significance. By the same token, he was so modest and honest with himself that he would refuse to direct dissertations on writers he believed he had not mastered.

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My own case startled me. He had turned me on to Rabelais, a writer he had taught several times at the graduate level, one whose spirit he relished, whose works he hoped one day to translate, and about whom he was already planning a book. Yet here he was telling me that the only way he could do justice by me was if I undertook a topic on Montaigne! Needless to say, I wanted to work with him and no other, and so I wrote on Montaigne.

Most of us did work on Montaigne and never regretted it. Don knew the writer as though he were Montaigne himself, and nothing escaped him. He was kind, firm, encouraging, even tolerant, with a total commitment to reflection, accuracy, and truth. He pored over every word, adding suggestions here, suggesting cuts there, pointing out omissions, calling for additions, catching contradictions, with an ever-watchful eye for lexical fantasy and stylistic infelicities. Whereas his comments on graduate papers could be terse, even unduly brief, his examination of dissertation chapters led to extensive commentary, and they were always rendered in the smallest and most tightly knit handwriting imaginable.

He was always available for discussion and advising, whether on campus or at home, during the week or on the weekend. A student was never an intruder, always someone warmly welcomed, or so he made one feel. His face would light up, and the appeal of his smile would draw us out, encourage us, reassure us. He was inviting and affable, but he was also a stickler for punctuality. He never looked at his watch, but if one were invited to his apartment for a Saturday morning consultation from 11:00 until 1:00, the discussion ended precisely at 1:00.

Of course, we, his students, always got more than we bargained for. We were not writing in a vacuum, and we were not allowed to flounder around. He could easily have written every dissertation he directed. It was our work, of course, but he had an uncanny idea of where we were going and how it would undoubtedly turn out. Working with him, one had a sense of accomplishment, born perhaps from the feeling of security we felt emanating from his knowledge and grasp of the field. We also knew that he shared our discoveries and achievements with deep pleasure. It was in the course of these exchanges and the entire experience of directing his students' first important work of scholarship that his most prized and lasting friendships were forged.

As for Don's knowledge of Montaigne's text, it was legendary, and I for one reaped its benefit in more ways than one. On several occasions, I was forced to turn in chapters in which I was not always able to find among my notes the required reference to book, essay, and page in the near-eighteen-hundred-page edition of Montaigne's complete works I was using. I would therefore leave sufficient space between parentheses, thereby indicating that I knew the information was lacking and that I would have to provide it at some point. Every such chapter was returned to me with all the blanks filled in! Prior to Roy E. Leake's *Concordance* (1981) for the *Essays*, Don's memory and mastery of the text were the best tools available.

This kind of knowledge and accuracy was the cornerstone of Donald Frame's own scholarship. He would not pronounce himself, whatever the subject, without first examining and sifting through every shred of evidence available. As a literary scholar, his need to command and control the primary text led him very early in his career toward translation into English, a language whose vibrancy and pungency he loved and wielded with great joy and effectiveness in his own writing.

Don was a gifted translator, to be sure, and he undertook translation because it brought him pleasure and because he recognized that the writers to whom he was attracted were in need of better and keener "Englishing" than had been the case. But translation also served two far more important purposes. On the one hand, he conceived of translation as an interpretive strategy, and, on the other, translation enabled him to exercise his judgment à la Montaigne and to pit himself against his predecessors. As a test of his abilities and knowledge, translation became a means by which both he and his understanding of the text grew apace. I know that he saw himself at work in Montaigne's famous passage in "Of Democritus and Heraclitus" on the centrality of judgment (given here in Don's translation):

> Judgment is a tool to use on all subjects, and comes in everywhere. Therefore in the tests that I make of it here, I use every sort of occasion. If it is a subject I do not understand at all, even on that I essay my judgment, sounding the ford from a good distance;

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and then, finding it too deep for my height, I stick to the bank. And this acknowledgement that I cannot cross over is a token of its action, indeed one of those it is most proud of. Sometimes in a vain and non-existent subject I try to see if it will find the wherewithal to give it body, prop it up, and support it. Sometimes I lead it to a noble and well-worn subject in which it has nothing original to discover, the road being so beaten that it can walk only in others' footsteps. There it plays its part by choosing the way that seems best to it, and of a thousand paths it says that this one or that was the most wisely chosen.

Translation attracted and preoccupied Don throughout his life. His first attempts at translating Montaigne appeared in 1943 *(Selected Essays)* and *The Complete Works* were published in 1957. He was also interested in writers outside the Renaissance: Voltaire, Prévost, and Molière. He translated *Candide, Zadig, and Selected Stories* (1961), *Manon Lescaut* (1961), *Tartuffe and Other Plays* (1967), and *The Misanthrope and Other Plays* (1968). And in retirement, his major project was *The Complete Works of François Rabelais* published in late 1991, seven months after his death.

By dealing with the blood and guts of the text, so to speak, and by grappling with thorny questions of meaning and appropriate rendering, especially in the case of Montaigne and Rabelais, Don hoped to penetrate the text and assimilate it in such a way that it would become a part of himself, as easily accessible as his nose or his date of birth. Writers he was not able to digest in this way remained largely outside his area of competence and interest.

Of all the writers he worked with, Don's favorite was of course Montaigne. It would not be an overstatement to say that he loved Montaigne and that he would have given anything for the opportunity to be on the receiving end of Montaigne's wish to find a friend to whom he could convey himself live in "essays in flesh and bone." It was a fascinating love affair, all the more so because Don did not set out to specialize in the Renaissance or to be a Montaigne scholar. As a doctoral student at Columbia University, he planned on specializing in the nineteenth century, and his original interest in Montaigne was in the essayist's literary fortunes and reception in France from 1812 to 1852.

Don's exhaustive study, *Montaigne in France, 1812–1852,* was published in 1940. It remains to this day a model of thorough and sound scholarship, and it established from the very beginning the principles by which Donald Frame would always be guided: be comprehensive, thorough, sift through everything, organize your thoughts and topics, do not write a word until you have mastered your subject, and, finally, be sure your writing is engaging and readily understandable, or "pellucid," as he liked to joke. In the course of his research for this first book, Don accumulated thousands of statements on Montaigne. It would have been easy to organize his findings chronologically and by author, but also far less rewarding. Since he had a sure command of his material, he chose to study it and to present his soundings in connection with topics. As a result, while his sifting and ordering revealed an increasingly accepted picture of Montaigne as an extraordinary student of human nature, Montaigne's desire to seduce the reader exercised its magic on Don.

For almost thirty years, from the late 1930s to the late 1960s, Montaigne and Don were inseparable. In the 1970s and 1980s, Montaigne was never far from his mind, but Rabelais had now joined them at the table and was consuming almost all of Don's time.

Except for the three years he spent on active duty as a lieutenant in the navy during the war (1943–46), Don spent the 1940s and the first half of the 1950s preparing his translation of Montaigne and the first of his major books on him, Montaigne's *Discovery of Man: The Humanization of a Humanist* (1955). His study was immediately acclaimed as groundbreaking, at once profoundly convincing as well as consonant with Montaigne's manner. To this day, readers of the book sense the deep kinship between Montaigne and Donald Frame that pervades all of the latter's scholarly writing.

In his effort to understand how Montaigne became the writer and sage we know, Don studied the combined influence of books and events in Montaigne's life, thereby enhancing our appreciation of Montaigne's meditative journey and progression toward a fuller understanding and acceptance of himself and a greater confidence in mankind. In clear, unpretentious, and graceful prose, Don displayed an enormous command of data and an unfailing sensitivity to both Montaigne's man-

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ner and to the varied concerns and values that preoccupied him throughout his search for naturalness and wisdom.

Don was enthralled by both the man and the writer in Montaigne, and he was particularly drawn to the concepts of self-study and self-portraiture. For him, the book was truly the man, and to walk with the book in hand was to walk alongside Montaigne himself. To know one was to know the other, for the book was truly self-fashioning, its originality resting on the fact that his work was "not concerned with some third-hand, extraneous purpose, like all other books," as Montaigne himself had put it. His book was "consubstantial with its author": "I have no more made my book than my book has made me," Montaigne had written in "Of Giving the Lie." Don was particularly attuned to the unfolding portrait, and he sought out its change and permanence in Montaigne's dominant concern, the living of a life.

In *Montaigne: A Biography* (1965), his second major examination of Montaigne, Don assembled all he knew and had learned about Montaigne as a man and as a moral philosopher. In his own inimitable way—with clarity, authority, wit—he digested a vast amount of information and placed before us the most coherent, convincing, and compelling portrait of Montaigne we have. His searching assessment was both loving and honest. Happily, the Montaigne he drew bears an uncanny resemblance to Don himself. All readers of Montaigne at one time or another fall into the essayist's trap, but without a doubt Don and Montaigne were kindred souls, and at various points in his life Don would allude to his "twin" in unforgettable ways. For me, the most memorable of these instances took place not long after his sixtieth birthday. Montaigne had died in his fifty-ninth year, five months shy of being sixty. Don confided that he felt odd about having now outlived Montaigne. It made him sad, and he was almost apologetic, as though somehow he might have let Montaigne down. It was exactly this kind of remarkable consonance between Montaigne and him that enabled Don to write about Montaigne with such understanding, confidence, and conviction.

When he turned to Rabelais *(François Rabelais: A Study,* 1977), he was less sure of himself. As with all his previous work, he wanted to reach the broadest possible audience—the student, the scholar, the nonspecialist—and to provide everyone with a judicious and meticulous interpretation, at once helpful and commanding assent. He was fascinated by Rabelais's laughter and by the multiplicity of registers in the work, but he was not as comfortable with comic fiction as he had been with the "flesh-and-blood" essay. He wanted to solve textual puzzles and riddles and also get a handle on the man and the writer, but the fiction escaped him. Montaigne "spoke" to him, but Rabelais did not, and, as a consequence, he was unable to penetrate to the core of the work and to come to terms with the writerly process of one of the wiliest writers who ever lived. Ultimately, he was satisfied that he had given it his customary best effort and that readers would accept his study for what it was: a conscientious attempt to describe the contents of the work and a judicious summary of scholarly readings on Rabelais. As for his translation, he once sent me the following note: "I probably cannot render Rabelais as well as I did Montaigne; but I think I can do measurably better than has been done." Being the candid and modest man he was, he was able to judge his abilities and his own work in the clear light of day and admit to some deficiencies and dissatisfaction—no small accomplishment.

Like Montaigne, Don prized naturalness and honesty, and, like him again, he was also at peace with himself, acutely aware of his strengths and weaknesses, equally frank and open about discussing himself, giving of himself freely and forthrightly, cheerfully accepting himself and others for what he judged one and all to be—and always with wit, good humor, and a hearty laugh. He was a most independent man who could also be very stubborn, but "for the rest," as Rabelais might say, "the nicest guy in the world."

I always enjoyed the fact that Don had been a superb athlete and a gifted and avid tennis player, a game he continued to play as long as he could. As committed as he was to the life of the mind and to scholarly reflection, an enterprise that can lead to isolation and seclusion, he enjoyed the outdoors, the competition, and the friendship he considered so energizing. On and off the court, he reveled in talk on all kinds of subjects, although literature, scholarship, and the academic profession crept

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quickly into any conversation. The essential thing for him was the vitality of the exchange, the opportunity to take stock of oneself and to take the measure of the other, and best of all to forge bonds of friendship.

Here, too, Don was very much like Montaigne. To be savored to the fullest, the pleasures of life had to be communicated. Companionship and friendship were absolute essentials. Don knew Montaigne's famous words from "Of Vanity" by heart: "If . . . I knew of a man who was suited to me, truly I would go very far to find him; for the sweetness of harmonious and agreeable company cannot be bought too dearly, in my opinion. Oh, a friend! How true is that old saying, that the enjoyment of one is sweeter and more necessary than that of the elements of water and fire!" While his own need for friendship was undoubtedly deeply ingrained, Don's personal coordinates were shaped by his encounter with Montaigne and by the resonance throughout the *Essays* of Montaigne's loss of his dearest of friends, Etienne de La Boétie.

Don valued friendship as perhaps the greatest of human gifts, and he expressed his in countless ways. He didn't have to be tutored in the ways of friendship. He knew how to give—and without conditions—and his only hope was that he would be cherished in return for his own sake. His affection ran deep and for a great many friends.

He loved to chat and well into the early hours of the morning—the conversation, in turn serious, light, or jocular, liberally awash in "ablutions," one of his favorite words, taking him and the interlocutor wherever chance might lead. His entire being participated and reveled in these exchanges, and he was nowhere more himself and happier than in these encounters. When the friends weren't present, Don resorted to paper, and his correspondence rendered him present, not only by virtue of his language and cast of mind, but also through his matter-of-fact and at times clinical descriptions of his activities, thoughts, and health. On paper, he was totally uninhibited and, without dissembling or guile, gave free rein to the expression of his feelings and the declining state of his health. Over the years, as his physical condition grew worse, he had ample opportunity to relate his feelings and reactions with regard to what was happening to him, and I always had the distinct impression that, here again, he was very much under the sway of Montaigne.

In his correspondence, Don had a tendency to bare all with regard to himself. In person, however, he was a fine listener. At once attentive and solicitous, he truly wanted to know what you were thinking, feeling, and doing. He had nothing but questions, and he loved to keep up with his former students and friends. Even in his final year, and in spite of the physical devastation that strokes and accompanying infirmities had wrought, he remained not only mentally sharp but also interested in what was going on, even asking for offprints of newly published work.

He delighted in being a part of his former students' careers and their families, and his greatest delight was to see them flourish and prosper. In general, but especially with regard to his students and friends, he was immensely generous and unrelentingly loyal. When he could, he even anticipated their needs and proffered their candidacy for whatever came across his desk. He worked for them tirelessly and in a quiet, self-effacing way. He was not out to create and promote a long line of mini-Frames. On the contrary, he supported their very different paths and pursuits, and he basked in their accomplishments. He never knew and probably wouldn't have liked the term *mentoring*, so prevalent in the academic world today, but he certainly knew how to be a mentor.

Don was not a saint, and he was even willing to admit that Montaigne hadn't been one either. He had his faults, but, unlike most of us, he had pondered over them, analyzed and classified them, and had come to decisions about them. Of all the people I have known, he probably had a better understanding of himself than most, and he had no trouble living with his findings. He was happy with his strengths and never uncomfortable with his shortcomings. Like Montaigne, he had an uncanny sense of who and what he was and what he could expect of himself. He could be immensely stubborn, for example, and he knew it. But if he could not improve completely in spite of his attempts, he could accept himself and in the bargain disarm others by referring to Montaigne, who had said that he had a particular opinion about something and hoped that no one could dissuade him of it.

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Don was a straight arrow, the kind of man and friend for whom Montaigne would have traveled far and loved very much. He was, as he would say of others, a "peach of a guy." But he was more than that. He was "a soul of the old stamp," as Montaigne had put it in "Of Presumption," with regard to his friend La Boétie, "the greatest man I have known in person, I mean for natural qualities of the soul, and the best endowed . . . a full soul, handsome from every point of view."

May 27

LINDA PASTAN

You can almost hold it
in your hand:
one lifetime, polished
and ready to put away,
like one of those silver watches
they give you on the last day
of work, snug
in its shammy pocket
where it won't tarnish,
won't even tick.
We fill the hours' emptied
shelves with stories
of what our children are doing,
as if they were the heroes
instead of the minor characters
they used to be, needing
to be bathed and put to bed
before the real evening
could begin. If we are simply
marking time, let us do it
prodigally, strewing the minutes
like stolen flowers
in front of us, dying
as if by accident.

✪ LINDA PASTAN is the author of seven books of poems, the most recent of which is *The Imperfect Paradise.*

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Another First Day

(for Arthur Hoehn)

JOSEPH E. FASCIANI

Another First Day, the 21st, in a June
that has been particularly fine,
day after day after perfect night.

Just now, at six-thirty a.m., sunlight
fills my cell, my eyes, so much so
that I return from breakfast

and lie on my bed, eyes covered,
listening to Julian Bream play lute music
of the royal courts of fourteenth,

fifteenth, and sixteenth century Europe.
His *glissando* passages merge comfortably
with the soft clicks and sliding mop

of Rick, our tier porter, whose lined face,
beard, and shouldered hair are found again and again
in Caravaggio, although the light's different now.

There's less shadow and revealing dark here:
light fills our cell house from windows
that are half our walls; little remains hidden.

From unseen distance a small plane bumbles near,
its engine persistent through the air, through
concrete and the civility of first light,

until it drones its annoyance past my headphones
and into a *Judentanz* of Eastern Europe,
my favourite among all these selections,

where there is so much to love and cherish.

✪ JOSEPH E. FASCIANI's poems have appeared in U.S. and Canadian magazines.

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Satyajit Ray

The Plight of the Third-World Artist

CHANDAK SENGOOPTA

Early in 1992, the Academy of Motion Pictures awarded a special Oscar to the Indian filmmaker Satyajit Ray, who died shortly thereafter. The Oscar was in recognition of Ray's "rare mastery of the art of motion pictures and for his profound humanitarian outlook, which has had an indelible influence on filmmakers and audiences throughout the world." From that citation, one might imagine that Satyajit Ray was a household name in the United States. In fact, he is virtually unknown to the average American moviegoer of the 1990s.

The elite American reaction to Ray's name, on the other hand, is often one of recognition or even admiration. But this reaction is based on remarkably little knowledge of his work. Some of his early films (the three films of the Apu trilogy, *Two Daughters*) are relatively well-known. So are a couple of later works: *Distant Thunder* (1973) and *The Home and the World* (1984). Ray made some forty films over as many years, and these six films, although they are major works, can only hint at the richness of his oeuvre.

Ray's total output can be outlined only very superficially here. The Apu trilogy, comprising *Pather Panchali* (1955), which never had an official English title but is often called *Song of the Little Road*, *The Unvanquished* (1956), and *The World of Apu* (1959), chronicled the struggles of a middle-class Bengali family across three generations and over various locales, rural and urban. A great deal has been written on the trilogy and the interplay in it of tradition and modernity, symbolized by the village and the city. These rhythmic alternations presaged Ray's own cinematic path. In his choice of material for his films, he too moved from the village to the city and back again. He also moved from one historical era to another, from one social class to others, and from genre to genre. Ray never stuck to any one of them for long, but he did not move away from any forever. His oeuvre resembles an intricately structured rondo. Themes are succeeded by new themes, but the old themes, often modified, return in time, to be followed again by others.

Even between *The Unvanquished* and *The World of Apu*, Ray made two films that were widely different from each other as well as from the trilogy itself: *The Philosopher's Stone* (1957), a fantastical comedy set in a lower-middle-class urban milieu, and *The Music Room* (1957), an elegiac portrayal of the decay of the rural aristocracy. Ray then completed the trilogy and made *The Goddess* in 1960, a deeply serious study of religious superstition set in a rural aristocratic milieu, similar to that of *The Music Room*. In 1961, Ray made his first documentary: a massive one on the Bengali poet and humanist Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). He then filmed three short stories by Tagore, comprising the 1961 film *Three Daughters*. (The international version of this film has only two episodes and is entitled *Two Daughters*. The omitted episode, called *The Lost Jewels*, has been seen infrequently outside Bengal.) The locale,

✪ CHANDAK SENGOOPTA has been a physician, a psychiatrist, and a journalist, all in Satyajit Ray's Calcutta. He is currently working on a doctoral dissertation at Johns Hopkins University on the Viennese philosopher Otto Weininger.

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again, was rural Bengal, but each film incorporated a central character representing urban modernity. Much of their emotional charge derives from the resulting clash of world views.

The next year, Ray shifted gears again. *Kanchanjangha* analyzed the tensions within a Westernized, upper-class family from Calcutta on vacation at a fashionable hill resort. *The Expedition* (also made in 1962), in contrast, portrayed the twilight world of a small town, socio-culturally very different from a village as well as from the city. The next film, *The Big City* (1963), was set in Calcutta itself and concerned a lower-middle-class Bengali woman's effort to create a career—and a life—for herself in a male-dominated society.

The subsequent *Charulata* (1964) was the film Ray himself regarded as his masterpiece. Again, the central character was a woman, but of the nineteenth-century urban upper class. The theme of *Charulata* as well as of *The Big City* was fundamentally that of the Apu films: the development of the self and its dilemmas but transposed onto the experiences of the Indian woman, past and present. A grace note was added to these depictions of women with the first episode *(The Coward)* of the 1965 film, *The Coward and the Holy Man.* The second episode, *The Holy Man,* explored religious charlatanry in Calcutta and, despite its farcical air, was complementary to *The Goddess.* Both, in a way, can be seen as harbingers of Ray's very late adaptation of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (1989), where the polluted waters of the spa are changed to polluted holy water from a temple.

Thus, by the end of his first decade of filmmaking in 1965, Ray had moved far and wide in space, time, and social class and established many of his grand themes: conflicts between tradition and modernity, the position of women, the nature of religious superstition. These themes would unify his corpus without diminishing the diversity of the various films' content. Quietly, he had also started a career as a writer in 1961. Soon, his novellas, mysteries, and science fiction (all written primarily for children and adolescents but read by everybody) began to sell so well that he earned much more as a writer than as a filmmaker. From 1961, he also began to compose the background music for his films himself.

In the following decades, Ray continued to extend his stylistic repertoire and to rework his favorite themes in fresh contexts. He portrayed the sleazy pathos of Bengali show business in *The Hero* (1966) and attempted a whodunit with *The Menagerie* (1967). Then began a dramatically new phase in his career. The great social chronicles of his first decade were now joined by more analytical works on contemporary urban society: *Days and Nights in the Forest* (1970), *The Adversary* (1971), *Company Limited* (1972), *The Middleman* (1976), and the television short, *Pikoo* (1981). Complementing these studies of the urban bourgeoisie was the short feature, *Deliverance* (1981), which depicted the exploitation of the rural working class. Although each film is complete in itself, these films (except *Deliverance)* fall quite naturally into a cluster.

Ray had made films on contemporary Calcuttans before *(The Philosopher's Stone,* much of *The World of Apu,* and, of course, *The Big City*), but in his new films he was much more conscious of political currents and unsparing in his exploration of the seamy underside of comfortable bourgeois life. If the films are united by a theme, it is that of corruption in all its forms: personal, ideological, pecuniary, sexual. These are brooding, disillusioned works, despite their frequently bouncy humor.

Almost simultaneously, Ray also began to make films for children, which seemed to be the work of a different artist altogether. *The Adventures of Goopy and Bagha* (1968) was a moving, humanistic parable on peace and war, and its sequel, *The Kingdom of Diamonds* (1980), was an overtly political critique of totalitarianism. (For Indian viewers, this last film was also a lightly veiled denunciation of Indira Gandhi's 1975 effort to impose dictatorial rule over India.) Both films were packed with songs written and set to music composed by Ray himself, another facet of his artistic personality that is unknown in the West. *The Golden Fortress* (1974) and *The Elephant God* (1978) were cinematic versions of two of Ray's own mystery novellas.

Three of Ray's most famous works also date from these decades. *Distant Thunder* (1973), representing Ray's return to rural Bengal, was set during the worst famine in recent Bengali history. The somber theme was in keeping with the Calcutta films. In two other historical

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films made in this period, *The Chess Players* (1977) and *The Home and the World* (1984), the director's delight in historical reconstruction was as evident as in *Charulata*. But the treatments, the stories, and the attitudes were incomparably darker. The effete nobles of *The Chess Players,* who would rather play chess than defend their country against the British, or the amoral, selfish, nationalist agitator in *The Home and the World* could have stepped out of *Days and Nights in the Forest* or *Company Limited,* as far as basic attributes of character are concerned.

"One thing that should be clearly discernible in my films is a strong moral attitude," Ray once remarked. Through his diverse output—whether it is the adolescent Apu in *The Unvanquished,* the executive in *Company Limited,* or the British imperialist General Outram in *The Chess Players*—his characters all face problems of moral choice. They choose differently, to be sure, and even the immoral or amoral characters are depicted with precision and objectivity. But the filmmaker's own preferences and values are clearly indicated, too, usually through one of the characters. A great deal has justifiably been written on Ray's Chekhovian sympathy for his characters, moral or immoral. His simultaneous retention of a personal ethical perspective has, however, often been missed by critics.

This personal perspective appeared clearly in his last three films, *An Enemy of the People* (1989), *Branches of the Tree* (1990), and *The Stranger* (1991), each of them direct and unflinching in condemning the loss of rationality and moral standards in contemporary life. These valedictory films are pervaded by Ray's contempt for religious superstition, corruption, and the pettiness of conventional middle-class existence. The films are occasionally melancholy and frequently seethe in controlled anger, but there is not a trace of bitterness or cynicism in them. *The Stranger,* in particular, is imbued with a radiance and sense of wonder that defy facile analysis.

Despite their lack of familiarity with Ray's thematic and stylistic diversity, American critics have never been stingy in their praise of his work. In the sixties, when he had made only a bare handful of films, an anonymous writer in *Time* wondered whether Ray would fulfill his prodigious promise and become "the Shakespeare of the screen." *Film Quarterly* declared *The World of Apu,* the final film of the Apu trilogy, to be "probably the most important single film made since the introduction of sound." Pauline Kael stated that Ray's films gave her "a more complex feeling of happiness" than did the work of any other filmmaker. Such examples could be multiplied many times over.

There have, of course, been negative responses too. John Simon remarked in *New York* magazine: "It is not so much that Ray's films are slow, or pallid, or derivative, or choppy, or technically rudimentary—though they are all of those things, too—as that they are, for the most part, dull." Stanley Kauffmann found *Days and Nights in the Forest,* which is regarded as one of Ray's undoubted masterpieces by the majority of Western critics, to be "wretchedly photographed, archaically edited, sentimental and superficial in style and theme." "Neglect," Kauffmann continued, "is benign for some artists. . . . Satyajit Ray is a first-class artist, until you see his films."

Few American critics have been as dismissive of Ray's merits as John Simon and Stanley Kauffmann. (Even Kauffmann may have changed his mind later. After Ray's death, he wrote: "What is a hero? One definition: Satyajit Ray. Like tens of thousands around the world, I felt through the years that, whatever the many ebbs and occasional flows of film integrity, Ray was off there in Calcutta working—succeeding, sometimes succeeding less, but living in art.") And yet, as far as the movie business goes, could things have been worse for Ray's films in America if every critic in the country had agreed with Simon and Kauffmann? "In the midst of the hippie-rock-raga boom," William Pechter reminisced, "I have sat in a San Francisco theater during a rare Ray booking, and found myself barely shouting distance from the nearest person to me in the audience."

In 1981, the Museum of Modern Art organized a complete retrospective of Ray's work. Afterwards, David Ansen of *Newsweek* lamented: "When a Bergman, a Kurosawa or a Buñuel makes a new film, it automatically gets a major international opening. Yet in the last ten years only two of Satyajit Ray's features . . . have been distributed with any fanfare in the West, and many of his films have

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never been seen in the United States." Stunned by the "true range and depth" of Ray's corpus, Ansen exclaimed: "There are few film artists who can equal this Renaissance man for sheer cultural depth."

Even that retrospective—the most complete exhibition of Ray's works ever held in the United States—did not lead to any long-term, commercially significant demand for Ray's films in this country. Eleven years later, when Richard Schickel was asked to assemble a montage of clips from Ray's films for the 1992 Academy Awards show, he could not find one American company that held the television or theatrical exhibition rights of any Ray film. Eventually, he had to approach the British Broadcasting Corporation and Channel Four Television for the clips he needed. If Schickel had approached the French, he would have had a similar experience.

Films are business propositions anywhere. National differences lie in *what* is profitable *where*. Very few films could make money anywhere and satisfy critics at the same time. The silent films of Chaplin are the only exceptions that come to mind. A slow, contemplative work such as Satyajit Ray's *The Music Room*, for instance, would not last for very long in any American movie house. But this black-and-white film, made in 1958, ran for eight months at a commercial theater in Paris in 1981. As for television, any channel anywhere shows movies that nobody would regard as high art. Britain's Channel Four telecasts its share of trash. But it has also run retrospectives of Ray's films and long interviews with the filmmaker on prime time, and so has French television. Would an American network consider airing one Ray film? Even as a late-night filler?

There is no substitute for institutional conservation and dissemination of film culture if one wishes to develop audiences on any but the tiniest scale. Individual initiatives, no matter how sincere, are of little use in the long term. The American distributor Edward Harrison, for example, took up Ray's films almost as a cause in the late 1950s. It was largely owing to Harrison's efforts that the early Ray films got to be seen in the United States outside of film festivals. But after Harrison died in 1967, commercial distribution of Ray's films simply petered out in the United States, although *Distant Thunder* and *The Home and the World* were distributed with some expertise. Ray's fascinating Calcutta films or the films for children, however, never made it beyond festival screenings.

But, despite all its shortcomings, hasn't the American audience been more appreciative of Ray's films than has his own Indian audience? Doesn't every obituary published in the American press quote Ray as saying he had survived as a filmmaker solely because of his Western market?

This issue is far more complex than it seems. The complexity has as much to do with specific features of Ray's work as with the geographical, cultural, and linguistic conditions of India. To take up the second category first, the fundamental point is that India is a land of some twenty different languages. These are not dialects (of which there must be hundreds) but distinct, separate languages, seldom sharing even the same alphabet. Few Indians can comprehend more than two Indian languages, one of which is their own native tongue and the other, Hindi, which has a somewhat shaky status as the "national language." English serves as the "link-language" between different linguistic regions, but only for the middle classes.

All of Ray's films (except *The Chess Players* and *Deliverance*) were made in Bengali, speakers of which are most numerous in the state of West Bengal, a fairly small part of the vast subcontinent. Bengali is also the majority language in the neighboring nation of Bangladesh. One would think a Bengali film should have an audience in both places, but in fact the export of an Indian film to Bangladesh is difficult. Bengalis are also to be found scattered all over the world but nowhere in sufficient concentration to form an economically significant audience. In effect, therefore, Ray's films and all other Bengali films made in India have only one big audience: the natives of West Bengal. This is, mutatis mutandis, the situation of any filmmaker in India whose work is in one of the so-called regional languages, as opposed to Hindi, the national language. Even within India, a regional language film is, practically speaking, a foreign film in regions other than its own.

Foreign journalists (especially Americans) seldom understand all this clearly. Whence come such obtuse remarks as, "Ray's films were not popular in India." The fact is, Ray's

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films were, and are, exactly as popular in India and abroad as any film rooted in a regional culture can be. For regional films such as those of Ray, popularity means popularity with the relevant regional audience. They can have admirers beyond their regional culture—as Ray's films certainly did—but rarely in truly large numbers.

All this is inapplicable to those Indian films that are popular all over the country: commercial Hindi films made in Bombay. These films are set in a great, homogeneous India that does not exist. There are no Bengalis, no Tamils, no Biharis in them. Indeed, the characters rarely have last names, because Indian last names immediately evoke a particular regional identity. Intended to be commodities of entertainment, they are made on huge budgets, feature well-known stars, and are full of song and dance, melodramatic plot twists, love scenes (but little real sex), somewhat crude repartee, ditto jokes, and so forth. The story line is weak and the dialogue theatrical, to say the very least. Despite considerable technical proficiency, they exhibit little evidence of visual imagination anywhere. In films such as these, one doesn't miss much if one doesn't follow every word of the dialogue.

Satyajit Ray, in sharp contradistinction, aimed to discover, chronicle, and interpret his own Bengali culture through his films. If Ray's films have universal meaning, then it derives from their relentless particularity. Ray maintained that a truthful portrait of any human group would ultimately demonstrate the fundamental humanity of the subjects, a humanity that would bear some meaning for all human beings, across national and cultural boundaries.

He had, of course, to pay a price for this. Few people have the patience to struggle to the general through the (unfamiliarly) particular. Stanley Kauffmann felt that Ray's *The Goddess* and *The Music Room* "must have much import for Indians but have less for export. . . . Once the minimal 'travelogue' value of films like these two is drawn, they become remote: 'beautiful' in the deadliest culture-vulture sense." Ray, Kauffmann opined, had failed to solve "the continuing problem of how to be true to his parochial materials and immediate to the world" in these films.

Many Westerners have felt very differently about Ray's work. The Paris crowds that flocked to see the decades-old *Music Room*—one of the films that Kauffmann found so unappealing to Western tastes—obviously perceived its broader dimensions. It is undeniable, however, that for most people (and a fortiori, for most Americans), a film about Bengal could never be more than a film about an unfamiliar culture, and therefore irrelevant if not downright boring.

Intelligent marketing can undoubtedly help expand a film's audience. Without Edward Harrison, fewer Americans would have seen the Apu trilogy and other Ray films. Or take the recent films of Akira Kurosawa. These authentic Japanese works, marketed in the United States with almost as much flamboyance as any Hollywood product, still may not have as big an audience as does a Hollywood movie, but it is a bigger audience than Satyajit Ray ever had.

But even if Ray had received as much marketing support as does Kurosawa, would his films have been seen as widely as *Ran*? There are such things, after all, as degrees of foreignness. The least cosmopolitan American grows up with commercials of Japanese cars, perhaps even drives one, and tries sushi when tired of hamburgers. The news on network television details controversies over trade relations between Japan and America, and the television set itself may well be a Sony. Could any amount of publicity for a film make Bengal (or even India) seem as familiar as Japan?

Those general questions apart, Ray's work sets up its own obstacles. His films are slow, patient, and densely detailed. Even his most "epical" works (the Apu films, *Distant Thunder, The Chess Players, The Home and the World*) are epic only in their implications. Ray portrayed social turmoil or historical crises through ordinary individuals and their relationships. His forte was psychology. Describing himself once as "one who finds muted emotions more interesting and challenging," he remarked: "It is the half shades, the hardly audible notes that I want to capture and explore."

These "hardly audible notes" may evoke immediate reaction in the informed or otherwise motivated viewer but are usually successful in boring all others. Ray himself explained it best: "When a word, a gesture, an allusion or an image carries a special mean-

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ing, and is not understood as doing so, it may seem like a redundancy. A series of such apparent redundancies may well add up to a feeling of slowness—of time being wasted on inessentials." Slowness, indeed, was the most common charge leveled against Ray's films, even by his most sympathetic reviewers outside Bengal.

Much of the appeal of Ray's work for Westerners stems from his deep familiarity with Western artistic conventions. Ray grew up in an upper-middle-class Bengali milieu and described his cultural background as "a fusion of East and West." The synthesis of Eastern and Western cultures was the cherished goal of the so-called Bengal Renaissance of the nineteenth century. Ray's ancestors had been in the forefront of this avant-garde, and he himself, although born only in 1921, was one of its last major representatives in post-colonial India. This does not mean he was stuck in the past. Nor should it obscure Ray's importance as a critic of contemporary culture. It does, however, imply a certain attitude toward life, art, and culture that rejects parochiality in any form and that is as rare in Bengal today as elsewhere. Ray was as familiar with Shakespeare as with Tagore, had as much admiration for Tintin and Buster Keaton as for nonsense characters created by his father, was as conversant with Beethoven as with Indian classical music, and as fond of Piero della Francesca as of the murals of Ajanta.

It is no longer fashionable to praise this kind of cultural eclecticism, let alone practice it. Since the "Renaissance" attitude emerged in Bengal under the stimulus of Western thought, which was transmitted under the aegis of colonialism, the new pundits of the West (and their Eastern acolytes) condemn it as a colonial hangover. The cultural dilemmas of colonial and post-colonial existence are, of course, real and obvious. Equally real, but far less obvious, are the enriching effects a hybrid cultural environment can occasionally exert on individual artists. "Personality, the only interesting thing on earth," Thomas Mann remarked in 1918, "is always a product of mixture and of conflict: epochs, contrasts and contradictions rebound off one another and become intellect, life, form."

That colonialism led to the "cutting off of intellectual sectors from national reality" is valid only as a generalization. For Satyajit Ray, the appreciation of the foreign never entailed the slightest separation from "national reality." No filmmaker has captured the minutiae of Indian life, rural and urban, past and present, with the accuracy or feeling of Ray; no film has celebrated Indian classical music with the profundity of *The Music Room*; and no armchair criticism of Hindu superstition and the caste system could be as devastating as Ray's two films, *The Goddess* and *Deliverance*. What the noted Bengali writer Nirad Chaudhuri claims about himself applies equally to Ray: "I have not had to give up anything to become cosmopolitan. My cosmopolitanism is deeply rooted in all the particular soils—material or mental—on which I have grown."

In cinematic technique, however, Ray's allegiances were not multiple. He believed, probably accurately, that he owed absolutely nothing to traditional Indian cinema. He learned his craft from the Hollywood films of the 1930s (both what to do and what not to do, as he put it on many occasions) and much about film art from Italian neo-realism and from the work of such filmmakers as Jean Renoir. The content of his films, of course, was purely indigenous, but his film language was essentially Western. "Film, as a purely technological medium of expression," he observed, "developed in the West. The concept of an art form existing in time is a Western concept, not an Indian one. . . . A Bengali folk artist, or a primitive artist, will not be able to understand the cinema as an art form."

Film language, of course, isn't everything. American (or, for that matter, British) mall audiences will not see a film about Bengal no matter how Western its technique. All that such a film can hope for in the West (or in other parts of India) is critical appreciation and the support and interest of a small, somewhat elite audience. But this kind of audience cannot, by itself, sustain a filmmaker economically. That must come from the home base, which, for Ray, meant the middle-class population of Calcutta. This audience grew with him and to this audience the annual Ray film became the cultural event of the year.

This is not to say that, one and all, they loved him. But love him or hate him, in Calcutta one just had to see each of his films on release, and frequently more than once. Otherwise, one had nothing to talk about with

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friends and acquaintances—which would be a fate worse than death for the loquacious Bengali! Nobody who hasn't experienced this phenomenon at first hand would believe that mere films could lead to so much passion and argument, year after year after year. As a consequence, every Ray film ran in Calcutta for at least six weeks in three theaters for three screenings a day, seven days a week. This was the bare minimum. Most of his films ran for months, and *The Adventures of Goopy and Bagha*, in fact, holds the record for having been the longest-running Bengali film of all time.

By the standards of the Bombay film, these might still have been pretty small runs. But Ray spent only a fraction of the average Bombay budget, and he needed only a fraction of the Bombay audience to recoup his costs. Although he did not finance the majority of his films himself, Ray always succeeded in protecting his producers from financial loss, and very often they even made some profit. Not only did a Ray film recover its cost, it frequently earned international acclaim. Ray cherished the Oscar as his biggest honor, but, before he stopped entering his films in competition, he had won dozens of prizes at film festivals around the world. And even when a film failed to win a major prize, it usually got excellent reviews. Many also had respectable commercial runs abroad, especially in England and, later, in France. For a brief period, this was true even for the United States, thanks to Edward Harrison. These foreign runs were not significant by Western standards. But even the dollar or sterling earnings of a short, almost unnoticed run at an art house are substantial, when converted into Indian rupees.

Box-office earnings from Ray's films became increasingly important. He continued to be a very economical director, but the costs of filmmaking spiraled in Bengal. His Bengali audience remained loyal, and his films still recovered their costs. But the audience just was not large enough any longer to ensure real profits for the producer. The minuscule Western market, therefore, assumed a disproportionate importance. Ray, nevertheless, was clearly exaggerating when he said that, had there not been a Western market for his films, he would have had to stop making films and go back to his previous profession of advertising. This remark, without being placed in its context, was quoted widely in the American press after Ray's death. The Western market certainly enhanced the appeal of Ray to his producers, but it is doubtful whether it was quite as crucial as Ray himself thought it was.

In any case, the Western market never influenced Ray's choice of subject or style. He was always delighted when his films won appreciation or audiences abroad, but he never made films with an international audience in mind. There was, however, something that he craved from the West, something that he seldom obtained to his satisfaction in India: informed criticism.

Bengal has always had more than its share of talented writers, but film criticism is not one of their strengths. Even today, Bengali film criticism almost always means one of two things: plot summaries of films, interspersed with vague comments on their quality, or unreadably pretentious lucubrations, bristling with poorly translated Marxist or, nowadays, post-structuralist jargon. The only major exception was Satyajit Ray himself. His brilliant and pellucid essays on cinema, written in Bengali as well as in English, continue to represent the pinnacle of film criticism in Bengal and even India. Few filmmakers anywhere have written so much and so well on their profession. (Despite the availability of *Our Films, Their Films*, a collection of his English essays, this facet of Ray's career is unknown in the United States.)

Unsurprisingly, Ray was anything but satisfied with the critical response to his films in Bengal. In the early years of his career, he was lambasted by literal-minded critics whenever he deviated from the original stories in his screen adaptations. Later, he was taken to task for not being a doctrinaire Marxist. Later still, his critics found in him a dogmatic, old-fashioned moralist. Finally, they alleged that he had lost his earlier cinematic skills and that the chief reason for this decline was that he had never paid any attention to the sage counsel of his Bengali critics. Throughout his career, he also faced the charge that he peddled images of Indian poverty and backwardness to the West. These were the broad themes of the criticism; the variations and combinations were countless.

Ray expected critics to be mediators between filmmakers and their audiences. Crit-

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ics, therefore, had to possess a deeper knowledge of cinema than the audience. Ray failed to find this quality in Bengali (and Indian) criticism. His contempt for its ignorance, pretentiousness, and intellectual laziness became increasingly open. He cared as little for the Bengali critics' praise as for their strictures. When asked about the response of Calcutta critics to his late film, *The Home and the World*, he said: "There is praise.... But praise for the right reasons, for the really subtle reasons, is another thing.... I'm sure the critics here don't do their homework." Castigating Indian film critics in one of the last interviews of his life, he said: "The critics are not educated enough from the cinematic point of view. So a lot of rubbish is written. I don't care. I don't read it."

Whether his appraisal of Indian critics was wholly accurate or fair is unimportant here. The point is that Ray expected much more from Western critics than from Indian critics, which was the very reverse of his expectation concerning audiences. But here, too, the West was only of partial help. Each of Ray's films was full of material that a Western reviewer could have no access to. Ray himself realized that the synthesis of East and West attempted in his films could be seen as such "only by someone who has his feet in both cultures. Someone who will bring to bear on the films involvement and detachment in equal measure. Someone who will see both the wood and the trees."

Ray was trapped within a historical and cultural impasse. His Bengali audience sustained him financially. Western audiences gave some support. Western reviewers provided intellectual appreciation on matters of technique and style. Bengali reviewers showed some understanding of content and the literary dimensions, albeit only rarely. Complete critical evaluations, spanning both the content and form of his films, were unobtainable anywhere.

In a fragmented, provincial world, the price of psychological and cultural universality is incomplete appreciation. This fundamental problem is especially acute for the Third World artist. Goethe and Jean Renoir are better known in non-Western cultures than Rabindranath Tagore or Satyajit Ray are in the West. Shortly before his death, Ray said: "On our part, we are steeped in the West. What am I without Bach and Beethoven, Sibelius and Mozart? We have read all the texts that form the Western canon; but to most of them [Western intellectuals], not one book of importance has been written outside the Judaic-Hellenic tradition."

Ray's predicament was far from unique, although his long and prolific career illustrates it with unusual clarity. At bottom, these problems are unavoidable, perhaps even unresolvable, for all non-Western artists who wish to celebrate their own culture with uncompromising fidelity but without being imprisoned by it.

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The Poisoned Well

Percy Lubbock and Edith Wharton

DEBORAH HECHT

The craft of biography, one begins to realize as soon as one probes it anywhere beneath its surface, is quite as complex as the craft of fiction. The biographer, Leon Edel has written, "must be warm, yet aloof, involved, yet uninvolved. To be as cold as ice in appraisal, yet warm and human and understanding, this is the biographer's dilemma." Difficult enough even when practiced in good faith, biography, when good faith isn't present, can be among the most useful of weapons available to sink the reputation of an enemy.

Such a biography, I have come to conclude, is Percy Lubbock's *Portrait of Edith Wharton*, which Lubbock published in 1947, ten years after Edith Wharton's death and fourteen years after the publication of her autobiography, *A Backward Glance*. As a weapon, Lubbock's biography has not been without its effectiveness. The book has influenced scholars as various as Blake Nevius and Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, whose second volume of feminist literary history, *No Man's Land* (1990) is unwittingly negative in its portrait of Edith Wharton.

But, then, anyone who has studied and wished to write about Edith Wharton has felt the need to consult Percy Lubbock's work. Lubbock, after all, knew his subject personally. He traveled in the same literary if not quite the same elevated social circles as Edith Wharton. Lubbock adverts to his personal connection in the first chapter of his *Portrait* but in a way that ought to put any careful reader on warning. In this ten-page chapter, Lubbock reminisces about his first meeting with Mrs. Wharton, at the home of their friend Howard Sturgis. Henry James was among the guests. Lubbock describes Edith Wharton sitting "in her circle of light, upon the scene it transformed, and there was shade beyond it to protect an observer. It was clear, and this was a disappointment, that those in the shade couldn't hope to attract her interest; but at any rate there was plenty to observe." The description continues, several pages later; Henry James has left; Howard Sturgis, that odd duck, is knitting; and Edith Wharton is sitting by the fire:

> Now was the time when she might turn her attention to the unobtrusive young man, believed literary in his aspirations, who was still there in the background; but she wasn't in the habit of delving into shyness, she was accustomed to see gifts laid before her, and this poor creature's gifts, if he had any, were seldom to hand at the right moment. . . . The young man was interesting when you knew him—but would she see it? Yet she was a writer of books—books that I had finely read and acutely admired, books that I had even criticised in print; there was common ground between us if she chose to take it. But I had never seen a writer in our old world who kept such state as she did, and I couldn't go faltering up the royal carpet by myself, with my awkward step. It *was* a little disappointing—a little aggrieving, too. But there it was; my place was in the shade.

Decades after this incident took place, decades after he and Edith Wharton had ostensibly become friends, Percy Lubbock remem-

✪ DEBORAH HECHT's essays have appeared in the *New York Times, Newsday,* and other publications. She has recently completed a book-length study of Edith Wharton.

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bered his feelings of disappointment and pain over what he perceived as a snub.

Despite Lubbock's disappointment at their first meeting, he and Edith Wharton eventually became and remained friendly—until December of 1926, when Lubbock married Lady Sybil Cutting Scott. Wharton was much put off by Lubbock's marrying Lady Sybil, whose two earlier husbands, Bayard Cutting and Geoffrey Scott, were friends of hers. The same could not be said of Lady Sybil and Edith Wharton, who had never cared for each other. With each of her marriages, Lady Sybil was less and less liked by Mrs. Wharton. If the new Mrs. Lubbock was clearly one point in contention between Percy Lubbock and Edith Wharton, their friendships with Henry James, less clearly, may have been another. Lubbock, it is known, was intensely attached to James. James's own relationship with Edith Wharton was perhaps viewed jealously by Lubbock as closer to one of equals than his own with Henry James. Edith Wharton's own treatment of James, in *A Backward Glance*, respectful yet also comic, was simply not one available to Percy Lubbock. This, too, may have contributed to transforming Lubbock's mixed feelings about Edith Wharton into unequivocally angry ones.

Even though the break between Percy Lubbock and Edith Wharton, dating from the former's marriage roughly ten years before the latter's death, was well known among their circle of friends, Gaillard Lapsley, Mrs. Wharton's friend and literary executor, asked Lubbock in 1937 to write her biography. According to William Royall Tyler's "Personal Memories of Edith Wharton," Lapsley chose Lubbock after consulting with three other of her friends: Robert Norton, Kenneth Clark, and John Hugh Smith. All four of these men happened also to be friends of Percy Lubbock's. They may have sensed that Lubbock, who had not published a book since his autobiography, *Shades of Eton*, in 1929, needed to get back to work, and the Wharton biography must have seemed a perfect literary project for him.

Lubbock took fully seven years to write his *Portrait of Edith Wharton*, and when he had completed the book, he had chosen not to consider Mrs. Wharton's books or letters in her biography. This was all the more remarkable considering that Lubbock had himself written, in his *The Craft of Fiction*, that "it seems vain to expect that discourse upon novelists will contain anything new for us until we have really and clearly and accurately seen their books." Why Percy Lubbock intentionally avoided discussing Edith Wharton's books and letters is set out in a most Jamesian preface—and Lubbock was, as Mark Schorer once put it, "more Jamesian than James"—a preface framed as a letter to Gaillard Lapsley announcing the method and purpose of his book. He begins by stating that "any critical handling of her own books would be out of place; they would only appear, so to speak, as her own, in association with her, and there would be no attempt to take them from her and deal with them as ours, the possession of us all." If this explanation for his omission seems curious, Lubbock's explanation of his omission of Mrs. Wharton's letters seems even more curious: "She was not one to whom letter-writing was a natural overflow of herself and her talk—her letters would give no living picture of her to speak for itself." Quite the reverse turns out to be true, as we now know from reading R. W. B. Lewis's recent collection of approximately four hundred of Edith Wharton's letters—of some four-thousand-odd letters that are now extant. But the published letters alone provide a portrait of an artist who was abundantly alive and intensely involved with both professional and personal interests.

Although Edith Wharton's letters are excluded from Lubbock's *Portrait*, letters from her friends and acquaintances figure prominently in the book. Many of these were not strictly letters at all but "recollections, reflections, notes of all kinds" solicited by Lapsley and then, as Lubbock remarks, "freely placed at my disposal to be used in any manner that should accord with the design of the book. . . . On the help thus provided I have, as you will see, drawn very freely—more freely indeed than you will see."

That last remark has a double edge. The material solicited for inclusion in Lubbock's book presents several problems. Lubbock does not, for one thing, tell us how he decided which friends and acquaintances were solicited for recollections. Nor does he tell us which among those solicited were excluded. We do not know which recollections were edited or the extent of the editing that might have been done upon them. In at least one

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egregious example, we are not given the identity of the author of a recollection, who turns out to be—as one learns from R. W. B. Lewis's biography of Mrs. Wharton—Mrs. Percy Lubbock, who was Wharton's enemy. Caution on the part of later scholars in using the material assembled by Lubbock would seem to be more than warranted.

In *Edith Wharton: A Biography,* R. W. B. Lewis notes that twenty-six of Mrs. Wharton's friends were asked for recollections. Some replied with "little sketches of two or three pages; some with recollections running to fifteen or twenty pages; Gaillard Lapsley with a forty-eight-page memoir." Lewis tells us that Lubbock "made skillful but sparing use of the materials; the greater percentage was not drawn upon."

These recollections are used by Percy Lubbock as if each were an entirely reliable primary source. Yet Lubbock generally uses them to suit his own polemical purposes. One of the most thoughtful of the letters was written by Charles Du Bos, one of Edith Wharton's French translators. At the beginning of his recollection, Du Bos neatly formulates the connection between Mrs. Wharton's writing and their friendship: "In Edith soul and work are interdependent, and that is why in her books she gives herself wholly—though of course only to readers who know how to read, and in the world of today, a world in itself unreadable, few such readers seem to subsist." But Lubbock straightaway undercuts this when he writes: "I am not sure of his [Du Bos's] reading of her art, nor convinced that she was other with her books than she was with her friends."

In contrast, the recollections written by Mrs. Gordon Bell and the unnamed Mrs. Percy Lubbock, each of which contain unflattering comments about Edith Wharton, receive a very different treatment. In these instances, Lubbock reiterates and amplifies the critical remarks. But then he generally seems to assume, in his use of these recollections, that all praise of Edith Wharton was suspect, while disparagement was inevitably accurate and deserving of amplification.

The first chapter of Lubbock's *Portrait* sets out a two-page complaint against Edith Wharton for disturbing Henry James's working life at his home at Rye. "How little she understood the life of the literary hermit," Lubbock writes, "its dedication to solitude and silence, its sacrifice to its task!" Lubbock then describes Mrs. Wharton through the eyes of Henry James, making it seem as if James and not Lubbock were supplying the stringent views of Edith Wharton: "He [James] admired her effect on the world—he watched, he presided over it; he couldn't, if it really was her own doing, have designed or composed it for her more pictorially—it was as good as a fiction of his own." And now the stiletto sinks in:

> If she was a novel of his [James's] own she did him credit; his eye could find no fault. All this was much more than her pretty little literary talent, the handful of clever little fictions of her own; but there was that too, *ce qui ne gâte rien,* and a distinguished little ornament of its kind, still further marking her for the discrimination of those who know.

Two paragraphs later, Lubbock states, "It was enough, I suppose, that she was herself a novel of his [James's], no doubt in his earlier manner." (Lubbock, one almost need scarcely add, much preferred the Henry James of the later manner.) Thus, at the outset of his book, Lubbock reduced Edith Wharton from the status of a creator to that of a creation.

In his essay "The Art of Fiction," Henry James wrote that "no good novel will ever proceed from a superficial mind." How does Percy Lubbock judge Edith Wharton's mind? In his *Portrait* he first appraises her literary abilities as "pretty" and "little" and "clever," then goes on to write:

> "I have always," so she put it, "preferred the society of my betters"; and true enough her place in the schools of light and learning was by affinity with the masters—though not indeed at their feet: she sat with them at the high table, and talked and kept them talking. The learning that she tore from their books and their talk was as thorough, I dare say, as her ease in drawing and announcing her conclusions; with her impatience, that was always plucking at her attention and rushing her pace, the mark of scholarship was not hers, nor likely to be, but even among the severest of the pundits her free ways, her refusal to be intimidated or talked down, might be found both wholesome and entertaining.

Thus Lubbock declares that Wharton was no scholar and that her conversation was "entertaining." She was, we are given to understand, chiefly ornamental. We learn that he,

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Lubbock, is not "convinced that she was other with her books than she was with her friends." Lubbock then gives his opinion of Edith Wharton's relationship with the books she read:

> Her ways with books was that of a lover indeed, but of a lover by no means tender to caprice. Her books were all around her in the house, they had the run of the place from floor to floor, she couldn't exist without them; her rule was sovereign still. They too were not to expect that she would dawdle about with them at odd hours; there was no subsiding over a book at haphazard, in the first armchair. . . . Sometimes it was thought that the book had a scared look as she carried it off, as though it knew what it was in for. . . . A book, once taken in hand, reasonably asks to be read, and it hardly seemed believable that she could really have read it. Some denied that she had ever read it; it wasn't humanly possible, they said, that she could have covered the ground in the time. Some even put it more coarsely: she called it reading, but it was violating, gutting, savaging a book to use it as she did.

We don't in fact know whose opinion of Edith Wharton's style of reading is being presented here, but Lubbock goes on to contrast it with his own, which he characterizes as "the luxurious turning of page by page, the surrender, not meanly abject, but deliberate and cautious, with your wits about you, as you deliver yourself into the keeping of the book for all the time it takes—isn't this the true felicity of the lover of books?" Lubbock closes his paragraph by writing: "This I call reading, and if this is reading I certainly don't think Edith often read." By such means is Edith Wharton's judged a superficial mind. Without offering criticism of her discrete books, Lubbock is able, by indirection, to portray his subject as considerably less than first rate.

But even when Percy Lubbock seems to be praising Edith Wharton, the praise, upon investigation, seems thin if not factitious. Consider the following paragraph from the conclusion of the *Portrait of Edith Wharton*, wherein Lubbock imagines Henry James and Edith Wharton reunited in the afterlife:

> And now he [James] could see how the case had been wrought to a yet more masterly perfection; it was but a first light sketch he had admired long ago. Her own little literary talent, pretty as it was, had struck him as almost an irrelevance in those days, a hardly needful decoration of a design so happily conceived without it. But here it is now an integral part of the subject, deliciously complicating it, worthily tasking and straining the art that clothes it in form. *The novel in Edith Wharton—by this time it matches his best, a creation of his latest manner.* (My italics.)

Although at first glance, this reads as if it were high praise, viewed more closely it, too, carries its own drops of venom. For one thing, Edith Wharton, who did not admire Henry James's late style, would not have been pleased. For another, she would have bristled at the reference to "her own little literary talent." Nor would she have been altogether pleased at Lubbock's later reference to her as "always the golden pheasant." The condescension with which this passage, and *Portrait of Edith Wharton* generally, drips would have appalled its subject greatly.

When Blake Nevius wrote *Edith Wharton: A Study of Her Fiction* (1961), Percy Lubbock's book must have still seemed a reliable source. Nevius, at any rate, shows sixteen index references to Lubbock and four more that do not appear in his book's index. Nevius also relies on quotations from the same undisclosed authors of letters and solicited memoirs, cautioning his readers that he was, in specific instances, relying upon Lubbock's work. In *Henry James and Edith Wharton: The Story of Their Friendship* (1965), Millicent Bell relies so regularly on Lubbock's *Portrait* that she felt it unwieldy, in her words, to use "specific citations."

Now much of the scholarship about Edith Wharton changed with the publication, in 1975, of R. W. B. Lewis's *Edith Wharton: A Biography*. Lewis, for one thing, had access to papers that earlier writers on Edith Wharton did not; Lewis is, for another, himself a critic of considerable repute. In his biography, Lewis describes Percy Lubbock's *Portrait* as "witty and graceful by turns." But he then remarks that the book's "most striking characteristic to the thoughtful reader is the subtly distributed malice toward its subject, a careful, muted downgrading of Edith Wharton as a human being and a writer. The picture that emerges is surreptitiously false in many places."

Two years later, in 1977, writing in the foreword to Edith Wharton's early novella, *Fast and Loose*, which was then being pub-

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lished for the first time, William Royall Tyler, whose parents, Royall and Elisina Tyler, were close friends of the novelist, wrote the following:

> I have no doubt whatever that the principal factor that established [Edith Wharton's] human image for the next generation was Percy Lubbock's *Portrait of Edith Wharton*. Her personal relations with Lubbock, and especially with his wife, deteriorated sharply after their marriage, and his [Lubbock's] characterization of Edith Wharton in his *Portrait* of her clearly portrays personal animosity and the intention to cast her in an unfavorable light.

Was Percy Lubbock aware of his true feelings when writing about Edith Wharton? Was he aware that his *Portrait* was an emotionally charged and antagonistic one? One would think that so self-conscious a prose writer as Lubbock would be keenly aware of the effects he was creating. Yet R. W. B. Lewis, in his biography, notes that "Lubbock appears to have been unconscious of the effects he had wrought. When an intelligent young friend [Victor Stanley, an Episcopalian clergyman], after reading the *Portrait*, remarked to him that it had the air of having been written by someone who loathed Edith Wharton, Lubbock struck his forehead with both hands and exclaimed, 'But I adored her.'"

Yet even after R. W. B. Lewis's biography of Edith Wharton, scholars continued to rely heavily on Percy Lubbock's *Portrait*, and in ways that were not always made clear to their readers. Cynthia Griffin Wolff, for example, in *A Feast of Words* (1977), uses quotations taken directly from Lubbock, and she also quotes from Nevius and Bell—each of whom has embedded unattributed or misleadingly attributed material from Lubbock within his and her own books.

Perhaps the best way of noting how Lubbock's skewed portrait of Edith Wharton continues to live on in contemporary scholarship can be demonstrated by looking at "'The Blank Page' and Female Creativity," an essay on Wharton by Susan Gubar. In this essay, which is sympathetic to Mrs. Wharton, Professor Gubar takes up the subject of the creator and the creation, especially that of the woman as an art object (created by a male artist) and woman as a creative artist. Referring to Lily Bart, the main character in *The House of Mirth*, Professor Gubar writes that Lily "illuminates the problems Wharton must have faced in her own efforts to create rather than be created—efforts not always successful, *if we can trust the reported comments of so important a contemporary critic as Percy Lubbock, who, in comparing her to Henry James, quipped 'She was herself a novel of his, no doubt in his earliest manner* [my italics].'" Professor Gubar's footnote on this reads: "Percy Lubbock, quoted in Millicent Bell, *Edith Wharton and Henry James: The Story of Their Friendship* (New York: George Braziller, 1965) p. 21." In the process, Gubar, in a slip of the pen, changes the word *earlier* to *earliest*. Gubar also misrepresents Lubbock's careful reduction of Wharton by calling this comment a "quip."

But the larger point is that criticism, like bad news, travels fast. Lubbock's reduction of Edith Wharton continues through Bell and then shows up in Gubar. In a later book, *Sexchanges*, which is volume two of Professor Gubar and Professor Sandra Gilbert's two-volume study of women writers, the chapter devoted to Edith Wharton is titled "Angel of Devastation: Edith Wharton on the Arts of the Enslaved," and this chapter carries two epigraphs:

> She a writer, a novelist, a colleague of the great old craft?—she was a dazzling intruder, *la femme fatale*, the golden pheasant invading the barnyard.
>
> It was once said of Edith Wharton, and she liked and repeated the remark, that she was a "self-made man."

The first epigraph comes from the first chapter of Lubbock's *Portrait* and the second epigraph comes from his second chapter. More than half a century after it was written, Percy Lubbock's book continues to dominate the way that Wharton has been interpreted and received. "Justice to Edith Wharton" is the title of a famous essay of Edmund Wilson's, written in 1937. But before real justice can be done to a great American novelist, her first biographer's oddly skewed, possibly malicious book must be placed in perspective.

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Seconds of Free Fall and Chaos

WALTER MCDONALD

My bored brother dragged me
away from kiddie land, shoved me
roughly to the adult ticket booth,
the line dividing me from men.

Thrilled by tickets snaking from his fist,
I entered the kingdom of risks—
the hammer and zipper, the roller coaster,
I flinched when the hammer

slammed down, when the zipper toppled
and flipped us. I held the bar
in a car jerked up a track
and watched tree tops and tents

fall away. My brother leaned close
and hissed how many fell
from these seats last year, flung out
over screaming mothers. He raised both hands

and made me, the crossbar loose on my lap.
Older boys tossed their hair
and laughed, the heads of girls'
snug in their elbows.

Our car crawled on cables
grinding like bicycle chains
about to break, all rides of childhood
behind me, my arms high in surrender,

my skull wobbling
through tight turns, mashed down
like being born again to bright lights
and dazzling screams.

✪ WALTER McDONALD is the Horn Professor of English at Texas Tech University. His most recent books of poems include *Night Landings*, *After the Noise of Saigon*, and *The Flying Dutchman*.

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The New Cults of the Goddess

MARY R. LEFKOWITZ

In the early fifth century B.C., Xenophanes of Colophon observed that human beings tended to create gods in their own image. He complained that Homer and Hesiod made the gods in their epics behave as disgracefully as human beings, stealing, committing adultery, deceiving one another. "Mortals think that gods are born, and that they wear human clothes and speak and look like humans"; "Ethiopians think their gods have flat noses and black skin and Thracians say they have green eyes and red hair"; "If oxen had hands, or horses or lions, and they could draw with their hands and finish works like men, the horses would draw images of gods like horses, and oxen like oxen and make them have the same bodies as they had themselves."

The last three of these quotations are preserved by the Church father Clement of Alexandria, as an indictment of anthropomorphic paganism, and they are often cited as evidence that the Greeks themselves were aware of the limitations of their own religion. But primarily Xenophanes deserves to be quoted because his observation is, in a general way, true of *all* religions: humans create gods in their own image, depending upon their needs and what aspects of themselves they judge to be important at the time. Thus, Freud in his studies of the human mind describes the Judeo-Christian god as a wish fulfillment of the unconscious, a father figure, and religion itself as regression to a primitive stage of ego development. In its place he offered a new religion centered in the study of the human mind, with a new mythology that explained why the powers and terrors previously regarded as external were in fact internal mental processes.

Given this general human tendency, it is not at all surprising that once modern women began to perceive themselves as a class or genre with interests, needs, and styles of life distinctly separate from that of other human beings, they would begin to develop divinities of their own, noticeably different both in gender and character from the deities described in the writings of the Hebrew Patriarchs, the Church fathers, and Sigmund Freud. Although in recent years there has been evidence of increased awareness of the desirability of a religion in which a female divinity is the central figure, and new interest in the remote past in which such a deity or deities may have been predominant, new interest in the role of goddesses was manifested a century ago, in the earliest days of the women's movement.

In 1879, in the ritual that accompanied the first Tree Day at Wellesley College, the young women students imagined that they were praying to the hamadryad, or tree nymph, of their Class Tree and seeking her protection:

> Oh nymph divine,
> We're thine, we're thine.
> Thy beauty is our chosen shrine.
> We'll dare, we'll dare
> Thy fate to share,
> Oh chosen nymph
> With golden hair.

Since the Founders intended that Wellesley women become (Protestant) Christian missionaries, we know that the writer of this song and her contemporaries were not encouraged

MARY R. LEFKOWITZ, Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Wellesley College, is the author of *Women in Greek Myth*.

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to believe in any literal way in wood nymphs or hamadryads. But, at the same time, it is significant that they drew on classical rather than Christian mythology to express the relationship of their class to their class tree. Christian mythology, of course, was of no use to them, because it has no goddesses (with perhaps one exception), or at any rate no goddesses connected with trees.

The Tree Day song, quaint as it now seems, is in fact an embryonic feminist ritual, in which the tree represents the young and independent Wellesley female. Like Daphne in the ancient Greek myth, who resisted the amorous advances of the god Apollo, the tree and her nymph remain on campus, fixed in one place, for a lifetime or longer. The myth offers an opportunity for self-expression and independence, at least in the form of a tree. Hence the enthusiasm of the first Wellesley students for Tree Day and the rich, unapproachable beauty of the Nymph of the Golden Evergreen in the song.

But unfortunately the model of Daphne represents only one—and a limited—side of female experience. Suppose a woman leaves the campus after she graduates, gets married, and has children. Who in Greek mythology is she supposed to emulate then? Women who did not resist the advances of the gods, such as Io (who was turned into a cow), Danae (who was put to sea in a box with her infant son), Leda (whose daughter Helen was born from an egg because in her case Zeus had taken the form of a swan)? Titian painted Danae enjoying Zeus's attentions in the form of a shower of gold, but I do not find it at all remarkable that women writers, although eager to write poems praising wood nymphs, do not apostrophize the joys of cowhood, being raped by a swan, or voyaging across the Aegean in a box with one's infant son.

Christian mythology and legend likewise offer limited possibilities for women before motherhood. There is martyrdom (after torture) and extreme asceticism; after motherhood, devotion to the family and mourning for the dead. Despite the limitations of these religious traditions, it was inevitable that today's women would need to develop a new mythology of their own and that they would turn to paganism for models, though not exclusively to Greco-Roman paganism, as attractive as taking the form of a cow might seem in comparison with being gored by a wild cow (as was St. Perpetua). But—perhaps inevitably also—the goddess modern women have chosen represents themselves more accurately than she represents any goddess or goddesses in the past.

Unlike the goddesses in the other religions we are familiar with, the New Goddess is worshiped primarily by women. Her cult has no designated places of worship or ordained clergy or official iconography. Rather, the Goddess is believed to reside in all females and can thus be present in any individual or any gathering of women. She is the central cult figure of the New Witchcraft and plays an increasingly important role in feminist theology. Recent books describe specific rituals that emphasize female experiences such as mothering, nurturing, and touching; they stress togetherness and expression of feeling; men are not excluded from these rites, but they are regarded as secondary, and, if necessary, are employed as sex objects.

Many new books assure us that the present-day cults of the Goddess derive from long-suppressed ancient cults and that, accordingly, her worship represents the original and most natural form of human religion, although it was replaced in historical times by patriarchal religions. The process, it is suggested, can be well illustrated in Greek mythology: there Earth was the first divinity of all (except for the rather indefinable Emptiness (Chaos) from which she was born; but Earth then gave birth to a male god Heaven, who then became not only her husband but her master. In the myths, many gods and goddesses are born to Earth and Heaven and to their children, but however numerous and powerful the goddesses, the god who is in charge always remains male—first Heaven, then his son Cronos, and finally Zeus.

Present-day Goddess religion seeks to return to the earliest phase of the divine cosmogony, the primacy of the goddess Earth. Although goddesses from other cultures are studied, writers in English have tended to concentrate on the mythologies they are most familiar with—the biblical and the Greek: the Hebrew Eve in her garden paradise, the Greek Gaia (Ge or Earth), and, since there are so few myths about Gaia, her granddaughter, Demeter, because her name has been thought (although how accurately is another question)

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to mean Earth-Mother. The other goddesses from the Greek and other pantheons are understood primarily as aspects, or partial representations, of the first "original" Goddess.

The Goddess's history, however reconstructed, follows the basic outline of the myth: she was there first, and then male gods replaced her, establishing their dominance by rape as well as by such weapons as lightning and thunder. The male gods and their worshipers drove Goddess religion underground and emphasized the most destructive aspects of her character—for example, only the war goddess Athena or the huntress Artemis are usually cited, and the process has been compared to Hitler's Holocaust. Worship of the Goddess's life-giving aspects has survived, though primarily in women's worship, as in the many dedications by women suffering from female medical disorders to Artemis as Birth-Goddess. Other positive aspects of the Goddess's cult were preserved by uneducated women in the rituals of witchcraft and in European folktales.

Abundant archaeological data can be produced to show the importance of females in prehistoric times: statuettes of female figures, often with exaggerated breasts or bellies; beautifully crafted statues of bare-breasted goddesses from Minoan Crete, with snakes in their hands; empty shrines with circular, womb-like buildings that might easily be thought to represent female fertility, and representations of animals connected with human sexuality, such as bulls, bees, or butterflies. These examples, when combined, can be understood to show the importance in Goddess cults of the natural world. According to Marija Gimbutas, in her recent book *The Language of the Goddess*, "this culture took keen delight in the natural wonders of this world. Its people did not produce lethal weapons or build forts in inaccessible places. . . . Instead they built magnificent tomb-shrines and temples, comfortable houses in moderately-sized villages, and created superb pottery and sculptures. This was a long-lasting period of remarkable creativity and stability, an age free of strife."

If this vision of the past begins to sound more utopian than realistic, there is a good reason. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the worshipers of the Goddess are following a familiar mythological pattern. Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden; Greek poets also told of a Golden Age when human beings lived in harmony with nature. Hesiod in *Works and Days* writes:

> The life-giving land of its own accord brought forth a large and abundant harvest, and the people lived off their fields at their ease and in peace in good cities.

Is a natural world of the Goddess more likely to be factual than the Golden Age or the Garden of Eden? Probably not, because like the others, it is based on belief rather than fact, and also like the others, it is more likely to be informative about the present than any time in the past. Hesiod, the Greek poet who first describes the Golden Age, also complains bitterly about the time in which he lived: "For now is truly the age of iron, and neither by day or by night will humankind cease being vexed by pain and woe."

It is particularly tempting to try to imagine what the *prehistoric* past was like, since we know so little about it, and interpretation is required to make any coherent sense out of the artifacts that have survived. Archaeological data can be produced, but, without any context other than their archaeological provenances, it is not always easy to know what to make of them. Or, to put it another way, if we are not told what an object is by some external source, such as a label or an inscription, an eyewitness or other documentary text, we can only know what it is by analogy to something with which we are familiar. If many statues of females with swollen bellies are found at shrines in the Aegean Islands from the second millennium B.C.E, it is reasonable to assume that female fertility was respected. What is more difficult to know is whether the statues represent goddesses or women. Similarly with ritual; in the absence of written reports, we might know who stood where and did what but not what they thought or felt about what they were doing.

In their attempts to imagine what ancient ritual and religion was like, students of the past have tended to find what they were looking for. When the eighteenth-century English antiquarian William Stukeley investigated the great stones in Avebury, he believed he had found evidence in pre-Christian Druidic religion from "a picture of the Deity,

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more particularly of the Trinity." Relying on the same archaeological information (or even less, because since the eighteenth century, stones have been moved or simply taken away), Elinor Gadon, in her recent book, *The Once and Future Goddess,* suggests that the Avebury site was used for elaborate puberty rituals and harvest festivals celebrating the Goddess's pregnancy and fertility.

The same emphasis on female sexuality may be found in *The Spiral Dance,* a recent book of instructions for the celebration of the Goddess at Halloween. Even though the ritual she describes may have historic antecedents, the present version places a distinctive emphasis on sexual definition and development. According to the book's author, Starhawk (one of the most influential proponents of the new cult), Halloween is a festival of life and death, the fall harvest and the planting of the dead seed that is the beginning of the new crop. Coveners are asked to gather in a circle, while the high priestess explains:

> This is the night when the veil is thin that divides the worlds. It is the New Year in the time of the year's death, when the harvest is gathered and the fields lie fallow. For tonight the King of the Waning Year has sailed over the sunless sea that is the womb of the Mother, and steps ashore on the shining Isle, the luminous world egg, becoming the seed of his own rebirth. The gates of life and death are opened, the sun child is conceived; the dead walk, and to the living is revealed the Mystery that in every ending is but a beginning.

Here, as in Gimbutas's account of life before patriarchal religion, we can recognize the influence of Greek mythology—for example, in the idea central to the Eleusinian Mysteries that from the harvest comes the seed of the new crop, life out of death. The notion of the World Egg is Greek, too, from the less familiar, "underground," but nonetheless influential, Orphic cosmogony.

But there are several aspects of the Halloween ritual that strike me as strictly post-nineteenth-century: one is the emphasis on gender (Mother as womb), into which the god is incorporated, becoming the seed of his own rebirth; then the gates are opened and the dead walk. The ancients knew about gender, too, but they didn't dwell on it. In the story of Demeter and Persephone, other aspects of the myth, such as renewal of life and reuniting of mother and daughter, mattered even more to them.

In fact, if we read the ancient Greek text that describes the foundation of Demeter's cult at Eleusis, the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter,* what seems to matter most is a mother's poignant search for her lost child and her inability to find a replacement for her. The ending of the story is not entirely happy from either the mother or the daughter's point of view, because the daughter is restored to her mother only for a portion of every year. For the daughter, Persephone, marriage is literally a kind of death, because her father compels her to marry his brother Hades and to dwell in the Lower World.

Although the details of the mysteries (as the name suggests) were kept secret, it was this version of the myth that was celebrated in the ritual of the Eleusinian Mysteries. In addition, we know that the priest announced that a sacred boy child had been born and that at the end of the ceremony he held up a stalk of wheat. As the dead plant is the seed of the new crop, so the story of Persephone's descent and rebirth offers every mortal hope for a life after death, if only in a better, and happier, area of the Lower World. It is only in the writings of Church fathers who sought to discredit the mysteries, that we find reference to an enactment of a sacred marriage.

But modern interpretations of the Demeter myth consistently focus on gender definition. Even in 1902, Margaret Sherwood, a professor of English at Wellesley, saw the myth as an allegory of the lives of young females who left the nurturing atmosphere of the college in order to marry. The god of Death takes the form of a handsome young male, with sad, beautiful eyes, who gently and considerately takes Demeter's daughter away to the world of the dead. In the ancient *Homeric Hymn,* Demeter wears black clothes, refuses to eat because of the loss of her child, and withholds the crops so that humans starve and the gods receive no honor. In Miss Sherwood's poem, Demeter, who is portrayed as learned and detached, expatiates calmly and poetically upon her loss in blank verse, until some rustics appear and report that her daughter has been restored to her, at least for part of the year.

In Miss Sherwood's poem, Demeter stands aside with professorial dignity and wishes

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that Persephone had been unable to accept the handsome young man's kind invitation. In present-day accounts, the men that women love are themselves the enemy, and with them human history and, to some degree, traditional scholarship and book learning. In the current Goddess-cult literature, the story of Demeter and Persephone becomes an allegory about how patriarchal culture and "male" values replace female values of caring and nurturing. For example, in *The Goddess Letters: The Myth of Demeter and Persephone Retold* (1987) by Carol Orlock, Demeter is the Great Mother who watches her shrines being brutally destroyed by patriarchal religion, first Greek, then Christian. She is the goddess of all growing things, the natural life on earth. She has no permanent male partner. Her knowledge is instinctive, natural, evolving; writing, history, and laws are male inventions. It is her daughter Persephone who, through her marriage, allows herself to be dominated by male values and subservient to her husband. She cannot decide what to do about her mother's explanation of the world; in the end she leaves the decision to her husband.

In this version of the story, it is of course wrong for Persephone to allow her husband (rather than her mother) to make the final decision. As Gloria Orenstein, in her new book *The Reflowering of the Goddess*, observes:

> How many women in our time, raised on powerful Mother knowledge, and believing in it, have compromised themselves in favor of their Lord, have abdicated their courage, collaborated and conspired not with the "enemy" [here described as scholars and priests] but with the particular men that they love, whom they honor, and according to their whim, may destroy the fruits of their wives' creative and intellectual labors.

According to these present-day interpretations, the myth of Demeter and Persephone makes a political statement about the status of women and the potential loss to society that results from their subservience to men. Most writers insist that the enemy is not so much individual men as patriarchy, with its characteristic institutions, such as the family. Not that the New Goddess Religion is specifically opposed to the family; rather, because it regards the family as a secondary development, and an invention of patriarchal culture, it is not concerned with maintaining it. New Goddess rituals celebrate none of the characteristic stages in family life—for example, marriage, baptism, and confirmation. Instead they address the needs of individual, autonomous, and even isolated adults, men as well as women. As in the Halloween ritual, women are now encouraged to reach out and touch one another; to feel, to become one with the earth; to have temporary male partners.

In these accounts there is an implicit assumption that females are best off in the company of other females. In the ancient Greek *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, when Hades rises up out of the Earth to carry her away, Persephone was away from her mother gathering flowers, in the company of twenty-three other young females; many of them are Ocean Nymphs, but the powerful goddesses Athena and Artemis were also present. When established as Hades' bride in the Lower World, Persephone is miserable because she misses her mother. But the myth, even in its ancient form, can be understood to offer some limited hope to women living under patriarchy, since for part of each year at least, Persephone returns to stay with her mother.

Even though few other ancient myths describe the ties of mother and daughter so vividly, the mythology of the New Goddess gives prominence to accounts of the activities and life of collectives of women. According to "Z" (Zsuzsanna Budapest, originator of Feminist Spirituality), in *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries* (1989), in "the True Beginning, before the Judeo-Christian Genesis," the Goddess manifested herself not only as Earth or Demeter but also as Artemis or Diana to the groups of maidens who served her. These young women apparently lived in Dianic colleges, "according to the spiritual principles of Artemis, serving in Her shrines and blessing the sick." "Z" assures us (though without citing any ancient text) that the number of women in any Dianic college never exceeded fifty. The Dianics were either celibate or lesbian and kept apart from men so long as they remained in the college, though they could return to the larger community when they wished. But in the early period, mating occurred outside the context of marriage, and children were not paired off with their biological fathers.

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As I have tried to suggest, in these recent reconstructions of ritual and myth, references to ancient literature and practices directly address present-day concerns. So neatly does the religion fit what many women would like to believe about the past that it seems reasonable to ask whether these modern accounts of Goddess worship can be strictly historical. What was the Goddess really like? Was she ever worshiped in the form or forms that are now ascribed to her? Was she ever in charge of the pantheon of gods? I cannot speak with authority about the history of all the religions described by Gimbutas and the others, but in the ones I know something about, the answer is surely *no*.

In historical Greece and Rome, there were many goddesses who coexisted alongside one another, but they considered themselves to be separate individuals. When, in Euripides' drama, Hippolytus thought he would devote himself exclusively to the worship of Artemis and neglected the cult of Aphrodite, Aphrodite brought about his death. Aphrodite would hardly have relented if he had tried to claim that she was really Artemis in disguise; but he would never have imagined that Artemis and Aphrodite could be considered merely as aspects of a unitary goddess. Nor can we point to a time in which any goddesses were *in charge*. If, according to the best-known Greek account of Creation, Earth came into existence before the male god Heaven, it is because it is natural to imagine that a mother came first. Even though they were powerful and influential, Greek goddesses always existed in a world that was controlled by male gods.

It is only in Hellenistic Judaism that the notion of a unitary goddess begins to develop. In Proverbs 8:22–31, God's Wisdom is his first creation and stays beside him as his companion in the creation of the world; in the apocryphal Wisdom of Solomon (ca. 100 B.C.E.), God sends Wisdom to earth to rescue mankind; she led the Jews from Egypt (10: 18–19). In the theology of the contemporary religious movement known as Gnosticism, Wisdom (Sophia) in various guises continues to play a significant redemptive role for mankind. Although she is always subordinate to God the father, without her no soul can obtain true knowledge and salvation.

Sometimes in Gnostic texts, Wisdom (Sophia) is united with God in an androgynous dyad, or forms the third element in a trinity with father and son. In the tractate known as *The Thunder, the Perfect Mind*, the female speaker reveals that she can be identified in many seemingly contradictory forms and names; among many other things, she is the "one whose image is great in Egypt." Presumably the author of this tractate meant to suggest that Wisdom could at times be identified with the Egyptian goddess Isis.

Devotees of the cult of Isis in the second century C.E. themselves claimed that all the other goddesses were simply versions of herself under different names: in a dream, she tells the hero of Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* that one might call her Ceres (or Demeter) at Eleusis near Athens, or Venus/Aphrodite at Paphos in Cyprus, or Diana/Artemis at Ephesus, or Proserpina/Persephone in Sicily. A document from Egypt, written in Greek, roughly contemporary with Apuleius, gives a long list (in apparently random order) of all the goddess names (Aphrodite and Hera predominate) she was called by in different places; it addresses her as holy, mightiest, undefiled; it credits her with giving power to women equal to that of men and makes her responsible for the creation of the world:

> To all you give ordinances and a perfect year . . . in every place you showed that all men might know that heaven was established by you.

Another Egyptian hymn attributes to Isis the benefits that in traditional myth were bestowed on mankind by Prometheus; in particular, it is she who has power over the flooding and receding of the Nile. But it is impossible to know just how many people believed that Isis was the one universal goddess, especially outside of Egypt, since we do not know how many worshipers of Isis were prepared to worship her *exclusively*. Ordinarily pagans preferred to be initiated simultaneously into the mystery cults of several different goddesses, so it is not likely that all of her worshipers automatically identified her with the other goddesses they worshiped.

But the notion of a powerful independent goddess could not easily be accommodated with the fundamental notions of divinity in Judaism, Gnosticism, and Christianity in the early centuries C.E. The ancient Hebrew ten-

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dency to connect a woman's potential for doing evil with her sexuality, which derives from the story of Eve in Genesis, surfaces also in Gnostic religious allegory. The soul (like Wisdom, an abstract noun of feminine gender), although born a virgin, prostituted herself, but is saved by her brother, the Heavenly bridegroom. She is reunited with him in a marriage that restores the damage done when the woman led the man astray at the Creation, and also brings about her own rebirth, ascent, and return to her home with her father and brother. It is instructive to compare the wanton and uncontrolled Soul of the Gnostic tractate with the narrative of Cupid and Psyche (Soul) in *The Golden Ass*: the pagan writer Apuleius concentrates more on his heroine's state of mind than her body, and, like the heroines of ancient Greek novels, Psyche remains steadfastly faithful to her bridegroom until they can be reunited.

In canonical Christianity, the powers of the Gnostic Wisdom were given to Jesus himself; Paul proclaims Jesus as the Wisdom (Sophia) of God (1 Cor. 1:24). In the New Testament Gospels, significant female roles were given not to the quasi-Platonic Gnostic abstractions such as Wisdom or Soul but to the female figures directly associated with Jesus: the three (or four) Marys: Jesus's mother, the Magdalene, and the wife of Clopas (who may be the same person as the mother of James and Joses or Joseph). In the Gospel of John, these three women are present at Jesus's crucifixion. In the Gospels of Mark and John, it is Mary Magdalene, rather than his mother, to whom Jesus first appears after having risen from the dead. Jesus's mother, Mary, along with a group of women, is among the first brotherhood *(sic)* that gathered to hear Peter on the Mount of Olives after Jesus's ascent to Heaven (Acts 1: 14–15).

Even though the Marys are present at these critical times, they do not play an important role in the formation of the new Church or in the dissemination of its doctrines. They are accorded recognition more for their service and piety than for their teaching or performing miracles. In the Gnostic tractate *Gospel of Philip*, Jesus appears to be enacting the allegorical role of the heavenly bridegroom with Mary Magdalene. In the fourth and fifth centuries, Jesus's mother Mary is herself a miracle: "virgin whose womb brought salvation, mother who had no knowledge of a man." In the fourth century C.E., St. Augustine addresses Jesus's mother Mary as the nursing mother of all mankind and asks her to give milk not only to her son but to the pious. He praises her for having canceled out the damage done by Eve: "Sin came into the world through a woman, but it was eliminated by a woman." In Sedulius's Easter hymn (ca. 450), she is praised as the "holy Mother who brought forth the king who rules heaven and earth for eternity." She is the "unquenchable light of virginity," but not the light of the world.

Where then did the notion of a powerful, unitary goddess come from? Not from Greco-Roman or other European varieties of paganism, which had many goddesses. Not from Judaism, which has no independent goddess, but rather a philosophical abstraction dependent on God. Not from the cult of Isis, which never seems to have had the universality that its adherents claimed for it. Not from Christianity, whose central female figure is without sexuality, and whose power, such as it is, derives from her son. The New Goddess, unitary, universal, and powerful, is a modern creation, the female counterpart of, although totally independent from, the Judeo-Christian God. Now, instead of one god, there is the Goddess. Instead of the son, there is her daughter; instead of being like the Virgin Mary, the New Goddess is a mother who rejoices in her sexuality.

The New Goddess Religion, for all its ancient nomenclature, does not retain the structure of the polytheistic pagan religions of the past but rather presents a female version of the structure of Christianity, except that the Holy Spirit seems simply to have disappeared. As such, it retains and even imposes on the past some resolutely Christian values: what would Shakespeare's weird sisters have thought of the modern witches who insist that witchcraft can only be used for good?

Monotheistic notions are so pervasive in European culture that they appear to have made it hard to describe the development of religious thought in any other terms. In Jungian psychology, individual goddesses are merely faces or aspects of a central Goddess figure. The Great Mother is an archetype, or, as Erich Neumann put it, "an image at work in the human psyche" that might manifest itself

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in different ways at different times, but that nonetheless derives from the universal experience of mankind. Accordingly, descriptions of the archetype are based on the assumption that similarities are more important than differences, whether in space or in time.

Robert Graves's unique confection, *The White Goddess,* is a characteristic product of such a universalizing process, even though it is not explicitly Jungian, but perhaps influenced by the notion of archetypes under the influence of the Zeitgeist. Graves offered his White Goddess as an antidote to mid-twentieth-century Christianity and Communism. His "discovery" of the White Goddess is based on an intuitive methodology that, although learned and ingenious, resolutely ignores contradictory evidence, and, when inconvenient, the effects of chronology and geography. The Goddess is *white* because Io in the myth was turned into a white heifer; she has three aspects (the Io "trinity") because Hecate has three faces.

By substituting assertion for proof and possibility for probability, and taking similarity to mean identity, all the many different goddesses of ancient Europe become reflections of one another: after quoting Lucius's prayer to Isis in *The Golden Ass,* Graves asserts that "much the same prayer is found in Latin in a twelfth-century English herbal," without discussing possible influence or significant differences. Graves avoids complex explanations by referring to texts without actually citing them: "If you read Apollonius recently you would recall that [the Goddess Libya] appeared in triad by Lake Triton to Jason wearing goatskins." Apollonius himself mentions only three heroines of Libya, helpers, who came to the aid first of the infant Athena, and now to Jason and his men.

In constructing their own versions of ancient Goddess religion, the proponents of the new cults adopt the eclectic methodologies of the Jungians and of Graves. But for all the influence, direct or indirect, of the Great Mother and the White Goddess, the new cults explicitly do not replicate the traditional roles assigned to females in the Jungian Goddess archetype. Instead, they have created a religion that is particularly suited to the needs and problems of those twentieth-century women who seek to do away with—or do without—traditional family structure, such as (but by no means exclusively) avowed feminists, divorced mothers, and single women. It is not surprising that the Goddess archetype has gained considerable strength in an era when one-half of all marriages end in divorce and many women must raise children and support themselves or their families without the assistance of men. Part of the archetype's appeal derives from its ability not simply to confront, but also to celebrate, ambiguities that traditional religion has not coped with successfully, such as the powerlessness of the individual and the dominance of male over female, or the preeminence of word over emotion. Goddess religion offers instead the power of the powerless, the maleness within femaleness, and wisdom in emotion. As the anthropologist T. N. Luhrmann has suggested in her recent book *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft,* Goddess religion is a modernist, deconstructive religion that intentionally challenges authority.

I now understand better an instance in a book I was asked to review several years ago about lesbian nuns who had left the Church: one, who had renamed herself Sequoia, found that Goddess religion spoke to her emotional needs much more effectively than traditional Catholicism: "When we raise a cone of power and feel our collective energies spiralling upward I want us to feel very earthy." But aside from allowing her to use her own physicality simultaneously to express her oneness with the earth and to project masculine power, at least for the duration of the ritual, what other advantages can this religion give her, or its other adherents? Did Dianic Colleges have libraries and laboratories? At least traditional Christianity, whatever its other drawbacks, preserved literature and culture through many centuries of human barbarity and brutality. What educational values will Goddess religion preserve?

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REAPPRAISAL

Max Brod

HEINZ R. KUEHN

A few years ago, in the course of my studies of Heinrich Heine, I picked up a Heine biography written by Max Brod whom I had known only as Franz Kafka's friend, literary executor, biographer, and editor. After reading it I became intensely curious about the man whose account of Heine's life and work stood out from all the many others I had read. Here was one of those rare biographers—rare especially when it comes to Heine—who was wholly sympathetic to one of the most complex and ultimately unfathomable figures in European literature, who ventilated the dark corners in Heine's life with the fresh air of respect and understanding for the vulnerability of human nature, and who remained scrupulously objective in evaluating Heine's achievements and shortcomings. Since Brod had written the book in the first person singular, without being shy about quoting from his own works, I also learned quite a bit about its author.

I decided to discover Max Brod. Alas, deciding to discover him was one thing; discovering him quite another. It turned out that the man whose fame even in literary circles rests on the association of his name with that of Franz Kafka had himself published more than one hundred and fifty works covering the entire spectrum of the writing life: novels, poems, stage plays, scientific, religious, and philosophical treatises, essays, translations, librettos, biographies, autobiographies, and, to top these off, musical compositions. Obtaining at least those of his works that made him a literary figure of note in the German-speaking world of my parents and, to a much lesser degree, beyond the German-Austrian border, became a task that almost stopped me in my tracks.

On the other hand, I had no difficulty refreshing my memory about a time when the same fundamental issues that made Brod an activist on behalf of Zionism were hotly debated in the home of my Jewish mother in Berlin, and when the same fundamental questions about the meaning of life that led him to embrace the faith of Judaism led my father, a German writer and humanist, to embrace Roman Catholicism. That "history," the first half of the current century, is still very much alive for me. Moreover, as my preoccupation with Brod made increasingly clear to me, the same questions move us still, far beyond territorial, religious, and political boundaries.

In contrast to the Sturm und Drang of his time and inner life that is reflected in his writings, the outer course of Brod's life was remarkably straightforward. Brod was born in 1884 as one of three children of a Jewish middle-class family that had had for more than three hundred years its roots in Prague, then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. His childhood and youth were "an ocean of balm" (quotations from Brod's works are rendered throughout in my own translation from the German original) in spite of a deformation of the spine that forced him to wear an iron collar and corset for years. His father, a bank official, was of an evenhanded, reticent disposition; his mother a veritable volcano of energy and emotions. In his autobiography, *Streitbares Leben* (Combative life), Brod writes: "In my brother as also in my sister, my mother's energy was joined with my father's

✪ HEINZ R. KUEHN has written for *Encounter*, the *Sewanee Review*, and other magazines. He is the author of *Mixed Blessings: An Almost Ordinary Life in Hitler's Germany.*

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nobility and kindness to form a well-rounded character, whereas in me much remained unstable and I always had to struggle to maintain a semblance of inner balance." Religion played no role in the life of the family, although the father still observed the rituals of the major Jewish holidays, a childhood memory that was to be significant for Brod's spiritual development.

In 1902 Max Brod enrolled in the study of law at the German University of Prague, graduating in 1907 as "doctor utriusque juris," doctor of both canon and state law. He took an administrative job with the Prague post office, an occupation of whose "terrible boredom" he was relieved only when he was appointed to the press division of the Council of Ministers and in this capacity became the theater and music critic of Prague's German-language newspaper, the *Prager Abendblatt*. He was already a published author while still in his teens, and his early reputation as poet, novelist, and critic finally enabled him in 1924, at the age of thirty-eight, to leave government service and strike out on his own. By that time he was married and had become one of the most prominent figures of Prague's Jewish community. He first visited Palestine in 1928. Eleven years later he made it his homeland, where he combined, until his death in 1968, his job as Dramaturg at the Habimah Theatre in Tel Aviv, a function in the nature of an adviser on drama and literature, with an immensely productive life as author and publicist.

Brod's curriculum vitae can be compressed into a few paragraphs; describing his inner life in the various stages of its development is much more difficult. He articulates this development throughout the entire spectrum of his writings, which makes for often laborious, sometimes tedious, reading. Yet once I had started to read Brod, he drew me irresistibly into his life and work, because whatever he wrote and thought and lived is deeply embedded in and reflects his love, indeed his passion, for a specific place in a specific time: Prague, the center of intellectual life in Central Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Two of the three major books Brod wrote a few years before his death—after he had lived in Israel for nearly three decades—deal directly with his life in Prague: *Der Prager Kreis* (The Prague Circle), a quasi-autobiographical portrait of the men and women who made Prague famous as a cultural mecca in the half century preceding World War II, and *Prager Tagblatt* (Prague Daily), a novel.

In Brod's time, Prague's population consisted of 415,000 Czechs, 10,000 non-Jewish Germans, and 25,000 Jews of whom 14,000 chose the Czech, 11,000 the German, vernacular. The ethnic, religious, political, and linguistic tensions and conflicts embedded in this tripartite composition of Czechs, Germans, and Jews not only determined the history and specific character of the city but also the specific character of the man Brod. "I can and must give myself the epithet 'a polemicist against my will,'" he writes in *Combative Life*.

> That, it seems to me, is less my fault than it is the fault of the city in which I was born and where I spent the longest period of my life. Prague's fault. The old Austrian Prague was a city where not only individuals engaged in polemics against each other, but where three nations confronted each other in battle: the Czechs as majority, the Germans as minority, and the Jews as minority within that minority. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the definition of Judaism (nation or religion, or both simultaneously) was far from being precise and that a steadily growing number of Jews attached itself to the Czech sector. . . . Through the problem of the two languages alone, life confronted us with decisions in questions of culture that inhabitants of a single-language milieu don't have to face. Prague, the city of three nations, Prague, the polemical city.

For the young Brod and his friends, these confrontations and questions of culture began at a time when they had barely outgrown their childhood. "We were," he writes in *Combative Life*, "subconsciously full of Prague, the Prague of Rilke and Gustav Meyrink. . . . The old wars of religion reverberated in our discussions in a new, perhaps intellectualized form, though with no less seriousness. And the classical questions that Kemensky [John Amos Comenius] had once formulated in terms of 'the labyrinth of the world and the paradise of the heart' demanded an answer no less cogently as in the time of the reformers and humanists."

Who were the friends with whom Brod explored "the labyrinth of the world and the paradise of the heart"? They were, foremost,

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Franz Kafka and Felix Weltsch, the original "Prague Trio" in Brod's words, later to be joined by Franz Werfel and Oskar Baum. All of them were liberal, assimilated, middle-class Jews who were imbued with the German humanistic tradition. They formed intimate friendships that lasted for each one throughout life. The names of the philosopher Weltsch and the poet Baum have become virtually unknown to a reading public unfamiliar with Jewish literature or history. Werfel, who early converted to Catholicism without letting himself be baptized, still ranks as a prominent novelist and one of the most powerful poets in modern German literature but is little known beyond the circle of serious readers of Christian persuasion. Kafka, of course, has become a literary household word, and since it is impossible to utter the word "Brod" without conjuring up the towering figure of Kafka, a few of Brod's own comments about his still-controversial and much-discussed role as Kafka's interpreter may be in order.

"The ugly word 'kafkaesque' is an invention," Brod writes in *The Prague Circle*,

> but it is precisely this "kafkaesque" which Kafka detested and fought most violently. Kafkaesque is that which Kafka was not! He loved the natural, pure, good, and constructive, not the oddly-eerie, hopeless, not the strange that he always perceives and notes as a given in the world and incorporates with grim humor without making it anywhere his focus. This tender yet steel-like soul was not turned to destruction but to blossoming. Alas, he had no illusions about the difficulty of this blossoming and building-up. . . . One states that "angst" was characteristic of him. Where angst speaks from the letters and diaries of Franz, it is justified angst. It is the angst before the approaching horrors of Hitlerism which he foresaw in a kind of spiritual clairvoyance and even described before they happened. . . . That angst was the opposite of decadence, of nihilism, of the "neo-romantic" flirtation with decay in the preceding generation [of Prague's writers and intellectuals]. He was education-become-flesh. Away with the repulsive expression "kafkaesque"! It blocks the way to any understanding of this great figure! Kafka had to wring his levelheadedness and moderation out of a chaotic time in whose background dawned something even more chaotic, indeed catastrophic. This struggle makes his levelheadedness and moderation doubly valuable and precious, although it also presses upon [his stories] the stamp of the necessarily complicated, those curious, paradoxical, and humorous ingredients that have misled so many.

Kafka may have secured for the name of Max Brod a permanent place in the history of literature, but his name could be attached with equal justification to other names, some of which, as eminent as they may have been in Brod's time, have sunk into oblivion, while others have maintained their fame. As Brod's reputation as novelist, poet, and critic increased, and his circle of often-influential friends widened, he became the discoverer, promoter, protector, and tenacious supporter of a host of people "of whose shortcomings I took only the most necessary notice," but who, he believed, lacked the recognition they deserved. If they had already gained recognition in their own country, he wanted them to be discovered by his Czech and German countrymen; or, if they were Czechs, by a German-speaking public within and outside the borders of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The long roster of these men and women includes the composers Leoš Janáček, Friedrich Smetana, and Carl Nielsen, the humorist Jaroslav Hašek (author of *The Good Soldier Schweik*), Heinrich Mann, Stefan Zweig, the pianist and composer Max Reger, the sociologist Alfred Weber (brother of Max Weber), and the Hebrew writer and Nobel Prize winner S. Y. Agnon. In this untiring and selfless effort, which lasted until his death, Brod was exemplary in ignoring the all-too-frequent temptation to look at a piece of art under the subtle influence of a political, religious, or linguistic bias, assessing instead its merit solely from the perspective of a universally valid humanism.

This "supranational humanism," as Brod called it, the consciousness of a pattern of consistency in history and tradition, coupled with a deep concern for human values and dignity, is the single common denominator of Brod's life in all phases of its often stormy intellectual and spiritual development. What he once described as Kafka's innermost being and the source of all of his creative impulses applies equally to Brod: "All his life he searched for one thing only: the purity of the soul, which means justice, social justice toward those close to you, toward every human being, and justice also toward the transcendental, metaphysical world." That search for the purity of the soul, for metaphysical truth, and for justice toward all, Jews and non-Jews alike, led Brod (to label developmental stages

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that by the very nature of life's fluidity are label-resistant) from indifferentism to expressionism and, when he was approaching forty, to a liberal, tradition-honoring, nation-conscious, and deeply spiritual Judaism.

Indifferentism is the name Brod gives to a view of the world he adopted as a result of his intensive study of the works of Schopenhauer ("when I was finished with volume six I immediately turned again to volume one"), which he began as a sixteen-year-old. It was a weltanschauung in which nothing really matters because man, lacking the freedom of will to make responsible ethical and moral decisions, has no control over his or society's destiny. Consequently, because the concepts of good and evil are interchangeable, man's only possible posture toward the world is a laissez-faire attitude that knows and understands and therefore forgives everything. Indifferentism found its artistic treatment in Brod's first poems, two collections of short stories, and in the highly successful novel *Schloss Nornepygge* (Castle Nornepygge), which appeared in 1908, when Brod was twenty-four, and in which he draws the ultimate conclusion from this worldview by having the hero commit suicide.

Brod was fascinated with Schopenhauer because he presented him for the first time with a comprehensive philosophical system that was "gapless and unassailable" once you accepted its irreducible premises. Kafka, in discussions with Brod, rejected Schopenhauer out of hand, calling his "a homicidal system." Although Brod committed himself intellectually to a posture of passivity in moral and social matters, his life at that time showed no trace of cynicism or despair. In fact, in his next novel, *Das Tschechische Dienstmädchen* (The Czech maid), he touches on a theme that would occupy him all his life: the liberating, humanizing power of love, both erotic and spiritualized love. Brod was a highly sensual man to whom eroticism mattered a great deal. Only once he refers obliquely to "a strong erotic temptation that caused me the most painful experience of my life," but his writings show just how deeply and lastingly the conflict between physical and emotional vitality and spirituality affected him. "Of all God's messengers," he said, "Eros speaks to us most eloquently." The entanglements of erotic love are a major, and often the chief, subject of virtually all of his novels and short stories, and love in all its dimensions is a central theme in his philosophico-religious writings.

Yet before love became Brod's message in his works and in his engagements in public life, there followed, after the period of indifferentism, a brief interlude, roughly between 1908 and the end of World War I, during which he became, in the opinion of his contemporaries, a leading figure in a suddenly emerging and short-lived literary and cultural movement: expressionism. *Expressionism* was the name given to the violent reaction and opposition by Prague's young German-speaking intellectuals and artists to the preceding movements of impressionism, romanticism, and neo-romanticism—something akin to the excesses of the "greening of America" period. It sprang from a hatred of the state and of authoritarian systems, including the father as a figure of authority in the family, and of social ills, and strove to give artistic expression in literature and the arts to an all-embracing love of humanity. Brod himself, though he published numerous essays in the journals of the expressionist movement, vehemently protested against the attempt to make him "the Pope of expressionism."

In fact, at this time Brod had already taken the first steps on a path that would soon make him an exponent—and this time a de facto exponent—of an ethical, humanistic Judaism. The first jolt that roused Brod from Schopenhauer's atheism and moral passivity was a meeting with the deeply religious philosopher Hugo Bergmann, with whom Brod later founded, under Masaryk, the Zionist Club in Prague and who was to become the first rector of the Hebrew University in Tel Aviv. An intimate friendship quickly developed between the two men. Bergmann, a noble, modest, and discreet man, made no attempt to proselytize Brod for, or even introduce him to, as Brod put it, "the sanctuary proper of his soul, Zionism." But it was through his merit that he made Brod receptive to what became the Damascus event of his life: his encounter with Martin Buber.

In 1909 Buber gave three lectures on Judaism before the Jewish students' organization Bar-Kochbar to which Brod belonged as "guest and opponent." Their influence on Brod was decisive because the lectures dealt, clearly and specifically, with the whole range

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of political, social, ethical, and religious issues raised by the Zionist movement. Equally decisive, and occurring at about the same time as the Buber lectures, was an entirely different experience to which Brod attaches even more significance for his conversion to Judaism than to his meetings with Bergmann and Buber. "First [in my Jewish development]," he relates in *Combative Life*, "is the miserable East-Jewish company of actors which I had not even discovered in a real theater but in the little 'Café Savoy.' Yet this company illuminated for me the true concept of Jewish folklore, terrifying and repulsive yet at the same time magically attractive." These Jews, as Margarita Pazi comments in her biography of Max Brod, had nothing in common with Brod's assimilated and cultivated Jewish friends and acquaintances, except that they were Jews. But for these actors, Jewishness was not acquired knowledge but a lived reality that fed on religious impulses and a longing of the heart.

Summarizing his encounters with Bergmann, Buber, and the East-Jewish actors during the decade preceding the outbreak of World War I, Brod allows that he continued to be "flooded by new questions which put in doubt that which was already won" and "by the pains of the quest for theoretical knowledge which cut through all nerves." Yet "one thing remained certain for all times: of the three peoples who live in Prague—Germans, Czechs, Jews—it was the third-named to which I belonged. This I knew with all of my being." One of the results of this inner turmoil was Brod's most moving and convincing historical novel, *Tycho Brahes Weg zu Gott (Tycho Brahe's Way to God)*. It is the story of a visit by Johannes Kepler in the year 1600 to the estate of the Swedish astronomer Tycho Brahe who lives in exile in Prague and who through this encounter is jolted out of his despair over the futility of his life into surrender to the love and mercy of a living God and the acceptance of his co-responsibility for God's working in the world.

As Brod continued to define "the new questions" and revise "that which was already won," a task that occupied him for the rest of his life, he became the writer and thinker whose vision and way of life offered to his fellow Jews a persuasive alternative to the lures of total assimilation and ethical and religious indifference. Among the several thousand pages of Brod's fictional, philosophico-religious, and critical works that I have read, a few pages in *Combative Life* struck me as his most eloquent and lucid reflection on this vision. There he writes:

> The motivators and chief organizers of the Zionist movement [in Prague] were young men of a singular purity of character and most intensive intellectuality, a group of shining exemplariness the kind of which I never met again in my subsequent life. The students' organization Bar-Kochba was its center of crystallization. . . . What did we want? What did I want in this circle? . . . All of us were united in the conviction that our work had to be realized through personal sacrifices and deeds, not through front-page articles or inflammatory speeches but through quiet efforts in the midst of the people. Our first goal was the renewal and elevation of the ethics and morals of the humiliated, maligned Jewish community which, after all, had in many ways corroded in the diaspora. . . . The Jewish state we wanted to prepare "over there," in Palestine, was to be founded on justice and selfless love between individuals and included, as a matter of course, offering friendship and help to our next-door neighbors, the Arabs. . . . We were no gushy idealists. . . . We were realists.

They accepted Buber's postulate, Brod avers, that an idea, to be made concrete, mandated an organization, but he immediately adds that organization would bring with it a diminution, disfigurement, and pollution of the idea's purity and goodness—a prophecy fulfilled in the internal struggles of today's Israel. Drawing the conclusion from his commitment to Judaism, Brod names two "revolutionary changes" in his personal life: his relationship to Germany and things German, and his decision to devote his life from now on to the elimination of evil in the world, particularly in the inner circle of Judaism.

Brod being Brod, he now began to search for a philosophical underpinning for the profound change in the direction of his life. He found it by developing two concepts: *Distanzliebe* (detached love) and noble and ignoble misfortune. *Distanzliebe* will from now on be the attitude that binds him to Germany. However, in bidding a "painful farewell" to Germany, he explains (in *The Prague Circle)* that

> *Distanzliebe* is valid not only in the relationship between Germans and Jews, but wherever two

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population groups collide spatially and spiritually. It is not a question of being better or worse, but of being different. This being different results in a feeling of distance between the two populations and, at the same time, in the wish to bridge this distance. . . . Because detached love is love, it strives to reduce as much as possible the distance between the two populations . . . in the full realization that, ultimately, one cannot join completely because nature did not create human beings and people out of the same mold but significantly different. Ergo, love in spite of distance, and distance in spite of love.

This "highly dialectical concept, loaded with tension," Brod analyzes in detail in his biography of Heine and his novel *Die Frau, Die Nicht Enttäuscht* (The woman who does not disappoint). Set in the Germany of 1932, the year before Hitler came to power, the novel chronicles a love affair between a Jewish writer and a non-Jewish woman that turns into a disaster because *Distanzliebe* failed to govern their relationship. Palestine, the new homeland for the Jews, must have as its prime mission the spiritual and cultural support and nourishment of this *Distanzliebe* in the Jewish diaspora, proving thereby that a truly peace-loving, peace-fostering nation can exist in a world torn by hate. "Above all," Brod wrote to the poet Auguste Hauschner, "Jewish nationalism must not create just another chauvinistic nation. Its sole purpose is to bring back to health the reconciliatory, all-inclusive humane genius of the Jew which today has degenerated, and to give a solid foundation to the messianic outlook."

The decision to become an activist on behalf of this "sole purpose" gave rise in Brod's works to his "kingly thought" of noble and ignoble misfortune. "Noble misfortune," he writes in *The Prague Circle*, "is everything that is unavoidable, given with being human, and against which we are powerless. . . . In this sphere, the only correct posture is humility and reverence in the acknowledgement of a mystery, a fitting posture in the face of a miracle. Ignoble misfortune, on the other hand, can be averted, demands active interventions of man, demands the 'founding of useful institutions.'" In his book *Paganism, Christianity, Judaism*, which he finished in 1920, Brod applies this concept to explain the difference in the attitudes of the three religions toward God and the world.

Robert Weltsch, in his 1970 Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture, "Max Brod and His Age," manages to reduce Brod's complex (and, in my opinion, partially flawed) thesis to a simple formula. For Brod, he said, "paganism is the religion of the *Diesseits*, of human life in this world which ignores what is beyond this experience. Christianity is the religion of the *Jenseits*, the world beyond. Judaism . . . is the religion which takes into account both worlds and believes in the coincidence of opposites, Grace and Freedom." Grace and freedom—concepts that are basic also to Christian moral theology—became for Brod the pillars of his philosophy and the hallmark of Judaism. Grace, for him, meant the humble and reverent submission to sufferings that are unavoidable because they are integral to the human condition, to noble misfortune. Freedom, by contrast, means our capacity, indeed duty, to combat those miseries and sufferings for which we bear the ultimate responsibility: the ignoble misfortunes of hunger, poverty, greed, war, and whatever else is within our power to mitigate or eliminate.

For Brod, love, of course, had to be a major element in his discourse on noble misfortune. Brod was convinced that unavoidable misfortune is inherent in the cause-and-effect structure of the world. Approaching again a key concept of Christianity, the redemptive suffering of Jesus, he holds that only love can break through the causal structure of the world, and that this breakthrough, made possible by grace, means suffering. Consequently, lest one deny the omnipotence and goodness of a personal God, God himself wants to suffer in his creatures. This "mystery" is "the nevertheless of the soul" that cannot be proven scientifically and has to be accepted on faith. Its acceptance becomes most painful in the never-ending battle between Eros and Agape, between sexual love and altruistic love—yet another concept that puts Brod side by side with some of the great Christian mystics.

Once Brod had laid for himself (and his readers) the intellectual and spiritual foundation for what he saw as his mission in life, he unswervingly followed a path that combined social and political activism with a diverse and rich literary and philosophical productivity. Reflecting in *Combative Life* on his accomplishments as an activist, he writes:

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The political life sucked me into its own autonomy. . . . I have the satisfaction of having saved the life and self-esteem of several hundred of my countrymen. Perhaps those whom I won for the Jewish Way and eventually for a well-timed emigration to Israel, thus rescuing them from the merciless hands of the hangmen [the Nazis] who in 1939 invaded [Czechoslovakia], counted in the thousands or tens of thousands. Did I lose time by letting my books and notepads lie idle for a long period? I believe one cannot characterize the active life I led as lost. I spoke before numerous mass assemblies, also in railroad stations, in theaters, in the orchestra pavilions of resorts. . . . In the Carpathian Mountains I lodged overnight in the most modest hovels, with mice as my bed companions, and often I sat through a whole night in unheated trains—the life of an agitator for a good cause.

Brod's agitation was effective even on the level of high-echelon politics. When in 1918 Tomáš Masaryk was called back from America to assume the presidency of the newly founded Czech republic, it was Brod who received Masaryk's telegram assuring him that Jewish rights would enjoy full protection in the new state—a telegram that became the basis for the continuing cooperation between the two men on matters concerning Zionist politics and Jewish security and cultural development.

Brod and his wife were among those who timed their emigration well, in fact with a razor-sharp precision of which they themselves were unaware: they left Czechoslovakia on the last train to cross the border before it was closed by the invading Nazis in March of 1939. Almost immediately after his arrival in Palestine, he accepted the position of Dramaturg at the Habimah Theatre in Tel Aviv, a job that satisfied his penchant for literature, music, and the performing arts. Yet for the next decade he published nothing. Instead, as he reflects in *Combative Life,*

I studied during this long chain of years more than ever, virtually starting all over again. The philosophical and religious root problems were thought through anew in the bloody reflections of new experiences [World War II and the Holocaust]. Pillars collapsed and new pillars grew out of the soil. A long-lasting and deep-churning revolution went on in me, particularly since the death of my wife [in 1942]. The great question, "Is the soul immortal?" . . . screamed for an answer. After the end of the war, when I received the news that my brother [and his family] had been killed in Auschwitz, another equally old question emerged with the same urgency: "How is the suffering of the world compatible with belief in an all-powerful, all-good God?"

This inner revolution resulted in what Brod considered to be his most important work, the two-volume *Diesseits und Jenseits* (This world and the world beyond) in which he once again, but now in a state of severe emotional pain, treats the questions of good and evil, sin and love, faith in God, and our responsibility as "God's hands" in the healing of the world's wounds.

Diesseits und Jenseits appeared in 1947 and was followed, in quick succession, by *The Prague Circle, Combative Life,* and some twenty-five novels among which *Der Meister (The Master),* a novel about Jesus, became one of his better-known books. In addition, he wrote several Kafka biographies and commentaries and completed his edition of Kafka's works. (As an aside, after Kafka's death Brod was to have "burned unread" all of Kafka's diaries, letters, and unfinished or unpublished stories and novels. Brod reflects on this instruction by his friend, which he vehemently rejected in discussion with Kafka, in a postscript to the first edition of *The Trial.*) In Brod's last book, *Das Unzerstörbare* (The indestructible), which was published in 1968, the year of his death, he reflects on his spiritual development from indifferentism to faith in a living and loving God, returning, as he admits, to those unforgettable years of the "Prague Trio" when "the labyrinth of the world and the paradise of the heart" inspired his discussions with his two closest friends, Franz Kafka and Felix Weltsch. Death surprised the octogenarian while he was working on a revision of *Combative Life.*

I came away from my discovery of Brod with mixed feelings. Mingled with my sense of satisfaction that my curiosity about him, first aroused by reading his Heine biography, had been justified, was a deep regret that even among serious readers only his role as Kafka's alter ego had kept his name alive. Whether this is a noble or ignoble misfortune, he deserves more, much more. Admittedly, reading his books and essays takes a sustained effort. Some of his novels are outright flops, and some are at best mediocre. Brod commits obvious errors of fact in some of his philo-

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sophical and religious propositions. He broods too much, a typically German affliction, and often he is preoccupied with himself to the point of narcissism. Even in his best novels and poems he is more analytical and intuitive than creative and imaginative.

Yet what sustained me in my exploration of Brod's writings were those sudden flashes of inspiration, of subtle yet persuasive psychology, of intuitive penetration to the heart of a crucial matter that made me hurry through the next stretch of uninspired, rambling cogitations in expectation of the next illuminating burst of brilliance and sometimes even genius. What he had to say did not deal with trifles. Because of him I know more about what moves the modern Jew in the diaspora and about the driving forces behind the Zionist movement. Through his writings as much as through the example of his life, he taught me something about the inexhaustible subject of love: love and politics, love and suffering, love and virtue, and love as passion and as manifestation of the divine. Above all, I found in him a scholar of vast erudition and an activist of selfless zeal for whom everything that occupied his mind or stirred his being to its depth converged on the single question, "Does faith in a living God still make a difference in private and public life?" To that question Max Brod answered yes, persuasively, passionately, a yes that had far-reaching consequences for his and our time. It is a gift for which we owe him a long overdue debt of gratitude.

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IN MEMORIAM

Paul A. Freund Remembered

DANIEL A. REZNECK

Many memories of Paul A. Freund surged to mind when I learned of his death: his kindness and courtesy to his students during the Paper Chase era at the Harvard Law School; the imperturbable calm enveloping him as he sat like an amiable Buddha in his office in the library stacks behind piles of books and manuscripts—over time these piles grew taller than he was, and he was a large figure until age shrank and stooped him; the arch of his abundant eyebrows and the twinkle in his eye as he delivered *le mot juste* as a toastmaster or after-dinner speaker (after someone gave him a lavish introduction, he would express his thanks and remark, "We should be thankful that an introduction is not an affidavit"); the breadth of his intellectual interests, far transcending law and becoming wider every year; his generosity of spirit and intellectual humility; his eagerness to hear the latest developments in the personal and professional lives of his former students; and his legendary speeches at meetings of lawyers and other groups. Erwin N. Griswold, the former Dean of the Harvard Law School, has said of Freund: "I never heard him speak unkindly about anyone. He never raised his voice, though his speech, in the classroom and in private conversation, was resonant, deliberate, and clearly understood."

Freund's honors and achievements were prodigious. His scholarship, especially his work on the Supreme Court, was acclaimed from the time he entered teaching after government service in Washington during the New Deal. He received more than twenty honorary degrees from universities around the world, including Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Bologna, and Washington University of St. Louis, the institution where he received his undergraduate degree and to which he remained deeply attached throughout his life. He was a fellow and past president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a valued member of numerous other learned societies, as well as of the editorial board of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. He was the epitome of a genuinely educated and civilized man.

Paul was also a complex man, a man of contrasts and paradoxes, light and shadow. He was intensely private and reserved, yet he visibly warmed to his audiences. His shyness disappeared before them, and, like a great actor, he drew strength and confidence from their response to his carefully composed lectures and talks.

Paul never married. One sensed that there was, at the core, loneliness and sadness. His face had a mournful expression, although it was frequently lighted by a smile in appreciation of a student's remark in class or a friend's sally across the dinner table. He had a gift of communicating great warmth to young children. His imagination, empathy, and gentleness enabled him to disarm the defenses of children better than their parents could. Naturally dignified and very much the vest-clad sage, he nevertheless appealed to children because of his keen sense of fun and lack of pretense.

Although Paul was at home in the company of educated men and women from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Cambridge, England, and from the Salzburg Seminar in Austria to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, he also had a lifelong love of sports. In his

✪ DANIEL A. REZNECK is a lawyer in Washington, D.C., and a former student of Paul A. Freund's.

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own life, he followed the maxim variously ascribed to Shaw, Mark Twain, Robert M. Hutchins, and many others—when I get an urge to exercise, I lie down until it goes away—but he was an avid spectator. He began as a member of the "Knothole Gang" of children sitting in the bleachers at baseball games in his native St. Louis. When the St. Louis Post-Dispatch wrote of his already manifest academic prowess in 1919, when he was eleven years old, it was careful to note that his ambition was to become a major-league baseball player. One of the bonds between Paul and me was that a great-uncle of mine played a few games that same year in the St. Louis Cardinals infield, before yielding to the superior skills of Rogers Hornsby at second base. Paul was the only person I ever met who actually saw my uncle in a Cardinal uniform.

The paradoxes extended to Paul's intellectual life as well. Although he was able to extract ideas of value from even the dullest students in his constitutional law classes, he applied such exacting standards to himself that his scholarly output never met the hopes and expectations of his students and readers. Each of his essays was the product of long hours of thought, writing, and rewriting. Each was meticulously carved, original in its theme, precise in its reasoning, felicitous in its expression. Yet he never produced the masterworks of which everyone who knew him thought him capable. His published books were essentially collections of essays, "fragments of the author's fleece gathered from the hedgerows through which he has chanced to pass," as he paraphrased Justice Holmes. Some of his best writing took the form of introductions to the work of others, eulogies, and lectures, not ephemeral but relatively inaccessible to wider audiences.

This inner conflict, if such it was, became most visible in Freund's role in writing the history of the Supreme Court. This project is supported by the estate of Justice Holmes, which the Justice had left to the United States. The writing of this ambitious multivolume history has been carried out under the auspices of the Library of Congress, beginning in the late 1950s and continuing to the present.

Freund was the logical choice for the editorship of the Supreme Court history. He was also to be the author of the final volume on the Court in the New Deal years. He threw himself into this project and spent much time and energy in editing the volumes written by other scholars, which have appeared at sporadic intervals. He spent so much time in the editing, in fact, that it consumed him. In combination with his difficulty in meeting his own standards of scholarly excellence, the editing prevented him from ever completing his own volume, although portions of it appeared in the form of lectures and law-review articles.

Eventually, as Paul aged and his strength waned, both the editorship of the project and the authorship of his volume passed to others. Like Lord Acton, who failed to complete his life's work, a history of liberty, which has been called "the greatest history that was never written," Freund's legacy lies primarily in his essays and the influence of his teaching on his students.

The Supreme Court history had a profound influence on Freund's life in yet one other respect. For many years, he was considered a likely appointee as a justice of the Supreme Court. In 1961, when he was fifty-three and at the summit of his powers, President Kennedy offered to appoint him Solicitor General of the United States, the government's lawyer in the Supreme Court and an office that has traditionally led to appointment to the Court itself.

Paul agonized and then declined the appointment because of his sense of duty and responsibility for the Supreme Court history, on which he had just embarked. This apparently served to exclude him from further consideration for a seat on the Supreme Court.

Other factors probably played a part in his momentous decision. At a time when academicians, especially from Harvard, were flocking to the Kennedy administration in Washington to participate in the excitement of governmental power, Freund reminded himself that he was "by temperament and conviction preeminently a teacher," as he once wrote of Justice Felix Frankfurter. He felt that he had more to contribute by remaining in the university and continuing to teach than by taking up secular preoccupations. Another factor in his decision was that he had been selected as a University Professor, Harvard's highest honor, and he had attained a serenity and equilibrium in his life that could be jeopardized by the prospect of uprooting him-

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self from the tranquility of Cambridge for the uncertainties of Washington.

I never heard Paul regret his decision. One can only speculate as to how he would have performed as Solicitor General and as a justice of the Supreme Court. He had proved himself a masterful advocate in two previous tours of duty in the office of the Solicitor General, although he was not the kind of lawyer who enjoyed the combat for its own sake. He would have been Olympian, distant and above the battle, like the "tenth Justice" that the Solicitor General is supposed to be.

Paul's legal philosophy was not cast in absolutes. As a justice he would have sought accommodation and consensus, although not at the sacrifice of intellectual rigor. He was skeptical of dogma masquerading under the guise of "original intent." One of his favorite lines, when asked what Thomas Jefferson or James Madison would have thought about some constitutional issue, was: If they were alive today, the only certain thing is that they would be too old to think clearly about anything.

Paul's keen sense of history also made him skeptical of the bits and pieces of history so often trotted out in Supreme Court opinions to justify results reached on other grounds. He was fond of quoting a statement he ascribed to Santayana that drawing lessons from history is like looking out over a crowd and picking out your friends.

Although many thought of him as a disciple of Justice Frankfurter, Paul Freund was his own man. He would not have fought on the barricades for many of the positions Frankfurter advocated. He had none of the meanness of spirit and vanity that characterized Frankfurter's later years. Freund also lacked Brandeis's passion and crusading spirit. He and Cardozo were more alike both in temperament and their absorption in understanding the legal process. Judge Richard A. Posner has written of Cardozo, in words that apply to Freund as well: "[He] was an essentially moderate person. He held no extreme views, whether political or methodological, and had no violent convictions; his was not a partisan personality."

My happiest memory of Paul Freund, which outlives my ability to recall any of his magisterial legal writings, is of a long luncheon with him on a rainy afternoon on Cape Cod several summers ago.

The occasion was a reunion of two old friends, Freund and Judge Henry J. Friendly of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Freund and Friendly shared a lifetime of dedication to the law. Each had served as a law clerk to Justice Brandeis after graduation from the Harvard Law School and each had achieved distinction in his own career. The two men shared a similarity in background and even in name. Both were of German-Jewish descent (the name Freund means *friend* in German).

I helped to arrange this reunion, knowing that Judge Friendly was deeply depressed by the death earlier that year of his wife of more than fifty years. Freund, with the graciousness that came so naturally to him, drove down from Cambridge to Chatham, where Judge Friendly was spending the summer, to try to cheer up his friend.

Chatham held special memories for both men. It was the site of Justice Brandeis's summer home, where Brandeis, a relentless worker, recharged his intellectual batteries every year on the firmly held belief that a person can do a year's work in eleven months but not in twelve. Freund liked to quote this dictum of the great man. For many years after the Justice's death, Freund made a yearly summer pilgrimage to visit Brandeis's children and grandchildren at the old Brandeis house.

Freund and Friendly were delighted and stimulated by each other's company. Their conversation ranged and soared from law to American history to the future of education to European travel and back again. Others at the table were listeners and occasional "interlocutors" (the latter in its strict show-business definition of the straight man for the stars of the show). The verbal rallies went on and on, but there was no hint of one-upmanship. This was a few hours of pure intellectual joy for both men.

One of Paul's abiding interests was in the ethical and legal problems created by advances in the biological, medical, and other sciences. At a conference of judges and lawyers in Williamsburg, Virginia, a few years ago, when asked what might occupy the Supreme Court in the twenty-first century, he

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responded that space exploration would give rise to issues as yet undreamed of.

On this occasion at Chatham, Freund and Friendly delighted in recalling how Justice Brandeis had made what would have been the earliest judicial reference to television in a draft of his dissenting opinion in the *Olmstead* case in 1928, dealing with the constitutionality of wiretapping. This was the famous opinion in which Brandeis wrote:

> Our government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or ill, it teaches the whole people by example. Crime is contagious. If the government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy.

The Justice, in his naïveté about the infant medium of television, had listed it as one of the ways in which an over-zealous government might pry into people's personal affairs and private papers, using TV cameras to peer through walls and desks. Friendly was Brandeis's law clerk that year. After investigating what was known about the properties of the new phenomenon, he persuaded Brandeis that the Justice had confused television with X rays. Brandeis removed the reference from his final opinion.

Freund and Friendly both exhibited remarkable intellectual powers throughout their lives. The conversation that afternoon at one point glanced off another Supreme Court case, decided almost sixty years before, dealing with the constitutionality of so-called declaratory judgments, whereby federal courts declare the legal rights and duties of the parties without granting any of the traditional judicial remedies, such as money damages or an injunction. The case involved a dispute over the lease of an auditorium building in Chicago built in the 1880s, and Justice Brandeis had written the opinion. I vaguely recalled from law school days that there was such a case, but nothing more. Freund and Friendly proceeded to give a detailed exposition not only of the legal issues, which were of some importance in their day, but of each of the pertinent clauses of the lease, provisions which must have been as dry and dull then as they read today. It was an astounding feat of memory.

The luncheon ended on a melancholy theme, as the two men thought back over the long list of Justice Brandeis's law clerks and realized that only a handful remained alive. But we parted with the promise to meet again in Chatham the following summer for another reunion. That was not to be; Judge Friendly died the next year.

Paul set out his own memory of this occasion at the dedication of a bust of Judge Friendly in the federal courthouse in New York City in March 1989. He called it his "enduring recollection of Henry Friendly," reminding him that "providential continuities like these can fortify us with sustaining memories and trembling hope." Paul Freund's magnificent tribute to Friendly captures the essence of his own life and career as well: his "authority did not arise from the exertion of a special power, but from the radiance of a luminous mind and a shining character."

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The Year of the Horse

SAMUEL HAZO

My father said, "All horses
    when they run are beautiful."
I think of that each time
    I watch Arabians in silhouette,
    the clobbering drays, the jet
    stallions that policemen rein,
    the stilting foals and colts, the sometimes
    bumping always pumping rumps
    of geldings harnessed to a rig.
They prance through war and history:
    "Without the horse the Mongols
    never could have conquered Europe."
And tragedy: "A horse, a horse,
    my kingdom for a horse!"
And sport: "Five minutes
    of hard polo will exhaust
    the strongest horse on earth."
Unsaddled and afoot, how far
    could cossack, cowboy, Indian
    and cavalier have gone?
                What made
    so many generals and emperors
    prefer their portraiture on horseback?
What simulacrum but a horse
    succeeded where Achilles failed?
And where did John put hatred,
    famine, pestilence and war,
    but on the backs of horses?
                And that's
    not all.
        Pegasus still says
    to gravity that poetry's none

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other than a horse with wings.
It's not a question of intelligence.
Horses, like poetry, are not
intelligent—just perfect
in a way that baffles conquest,
drama, polo, plough
and shoe.
So poem-perfect
that a single fracture means
a long, slow dying in the hills
or, if man's around, the merciful
aim an inch below the ear.
But when they run, they make
the charge or any boar at bay,
the prowl of all the jungle
cats, the tracking beagle
or the antelope in panic seem
ignoble.
Just for the sake
of the running, the running, the running
they run . . .
And not another
animal on two or four
or forty legs can match
that quivering of cords beneath
their pelts, the fury in their manes,
the hooves that thump like rapid
mallets on the earth's mute drum,
the exultation of the canter and the gallop
and the rollick and the frolic and the jump.

✪ SAMUEL HAZO, director of the International Poetry Forum in Pittsburgh and a professor at Duquesne University, is the author of *Silence Spoken Here* (poetry), *Stills* (a novel), and *The Rest is Prose* (essays). His new collection of poems, *The Past Won't Stay Behind You*, will be published in May by the University of Arkansas Press.

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Books

Themselves

EVELYN TOYNTON

THE FIELD DAY ANTHOLOGY OF IRISH WRITING, 550–1990. 3 volumes. *General editor, Seamus Deane. Field Day Publications/W. W. Norton & Company. $150 the set.*

Frank O'Connor, in his *Short History of Irish Literature,* begins with the assertion that the Irish gift was solely for concreteness; the Irish, apparently, were always incapable of abstract thought. Various earlier critics, taking their cue from Matthew Arnold's *Study of Celtic Literature,* lamented the inveterate Irish tendency to get lost in abstraction, a sort of perpetual Celtic twilight of the mind; according to this version of things, Irish writers were eternally in revolt against "the despotism of fact" and sought refuge in cloudy idealism instead. The only thing these points of view would appear to have in common is that both are concerned to tell us about the deficiencies of the Irish mind. In fact, much of the literary discourse of the Irish seems to have taken the form of scolding their compatriots for their inadequacies, often in much more violent terms than these.

It would almost be possible, in reading the endless attacks and rebuttals and broadsides and assaults flying back and forth, to forget that these defective Irish somehow produced an unbelievable number of great writers: Swift, Sterne, Congreve, Wilde, Yeats, Joyce, Beckett, O'Casey, James Stephens, Patrick Kavanagh, James Hanley—and, at some generations' remove, the Brontës, Henry James, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Indeed, if one were to take the Irish genes out of English and American literature, it would be virtually unrecognizable. Furthermore, despite their supposed intellectual impairment, many of the great scholars of the Middle Ages were Irish, as were such thinkers as Burke and Bishop Berkeley.

The only thing Irish writers have denounced more than other Irish writers is Ireland itself. "Great hatred, little room / Maimed us at the start," wrote Yeats of his "fool-driven land," his "blind bitter land," while devoting his life to the creation of a national literature that could give his fellow countrymen a national identity. Joyce, of course, hated Ireland so much that, like Wilde and Shaw and many others before and after him, he ran away from it for good, occupying himself on his journey into exile in writing mockery and insults of all the Dublin writers who had befriended him. Then, as all the world knows, he spent his life immortalizing the place.

What sometimes seems missing in all this is the hatred one might expect to find paramount: that of the English, whose treatment of the Irish was often so unprecedentedly brutal that it almost seems they needed to repress as well as suppress them, as though the Irish represented all the unruly passions in their own psyches that the English could not stand to face. Yet it might also be possible to see much of Irish literature as an act of revenge—words being the only weapon that the powerless could wield against the powerful. "The English," an Irish actor said recently, "rammed their language down our throats, and we turned around and taught them how to use it." And indeed, there is a note of defiance to much of Irish writing, even

✪ EVELYN TOYNTON's reviews of biographies of Wittgenstein and of Jean Rhys have appeared in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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that which is not explicitly about defiance, that both gives it its peculiar brilliance and clearly marks it as the literature of a people who never ruled the world.

There are also, of course, much charm and lyricism and wit and melancholy and all the other qualities for which the Irish are famous. And finally, there is much writing, period—a staggering quantity of it: so many tales of ancient saints and heroes, half-mythical and half-historical; so many lyrics and songs and ballads and plays and memoirs and novels and stories. It is somehow very fitting that the Irish should have invented marginalia: unlike other medieval monks, who were content merely to copy out Latin texts, the Irish monks couldn't keep from having their say, and wrote their own poems and personal reflections in the margins of their manuscripts. They complained of their inability to concentrate on their tasks, they wrote poetry about the difficulties of writing poetry; they wrote about the weather and—since most of them, too, were in exile—about missing Ireland.

This abundance of material makes the daunting length of *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*—three volumes totaling 4,044 pages—seem justified. And, as the title suggests, it is not literary works alone that are being presented here. Instead, the editors propose to introduce us to a wide range of "texts" that have been central to the shaping of national identity: political speeches, insurrectionists' defiant statements on the eve of execution, incendiary pamphlets, accounts of Parnell's downfall, as well as a sampling of popular fiction and poetry.

In other words, political correctness has arrived in Ireland, too. But, to be fair, this is a special case; the mixture of literature and politics, at least, may be inevitable, since the two can never have been more entangled than in Ireland. The political economist John Kells Ingram is most famous as the author of a nationalist ballad, "Who fears to speak of '98?" The critic John Eglinton characterized his country as one "whose poets all made the mistake of going into politics." Frank O'Connor said that "but for an accidental meeting with the old Fenian leader John O'Leary, Yeats might easily have ended as a fine minor poet like Walter de la Mare." According to Yeats himself, his meeting with O'Leary was the fateful encounter of his life as an artist, bringing "the poet in[to] the presence of his theme." (On the other side of the coin, Oliver St. John Gogarty said that the Irish Free State could never have survived if it hadn't been for Yeats.) Certainly the purely formalist approach to Yeats—in which his theory of the gyres is belabored while the innumerable real people and events named in his poems are never discussed—seems only arcane. And even when reading Joyce, it is vital to know more about Parnell than a mere footnote can tell us: is there any American president—or, more to the point, ruined American political figure—who is such a strong presence in the work of a great American novelist?

Then, too, if one can read Cicero's orations in a literature class, why shouldn't Robert Emmet's words from the dock—the famous "Let no man write my epitaph" speech—or Padraic Pearse's political pamphlets, with their eloquent calls to arms, be granted the same status? And the fiery parliamentary orations of T. M. Healy are often wittier and more stirring than much fiction.

But there are ways and ways of being political, and one problem with the *Field Day Anthology* is that it is less concerned to present the effects of actual political events on writers (and vice versa) than it is to find abstruse political themes in all Irish writing. Its editors often write as though the Irish struggle were not a matter of, for example, a group of desperate nationalists (many of them poets) seizing the post office in Dublin—a doomed and botched and yet posthumously triumphant rebellion that inspired much magnificent writing (James Stephens's *Insurrection in Dublin*, Yeats's "Easter 1916," for example)—but of combating the English "urge to antithesis" and the Irish "anxiety about marginality." In their dogged insistence on placing everything in a certain kind of political context, they seem to reduce historical acts and developments to mere mental phenomena, so that the political content here is in fact robbed of much force and urgency.

Of course, this is the way of academics everywhere, and perhaps the most disappointing thing about *The Field Day Anthology* is how conventionally academic it seems —how much it traffics in jargon about "hegemony" and "canons that operate as systems

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The 1992 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

The Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science

ONE LONG ARGUMENT: CHARLES DARWIN AND THE GENESIS OF MODERN EVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT. *Ernst Mayr. Harvard University Press. $19.95.*

Citation: In his book *One Long Argument*, Ernst Mayr provides a selectively detailed analysis of Charles Darwin's thinking as presented in his *On the Origin of Species*. Darwin's *Origin* challenged the very foundations of the intellectual and common thinking of his day and touched off debates that are still with us. Mayr defines the compound nature of Darwin's theory, identifying five major evolutionary themes: environmental change through time, common descent with modification, increasing biodiversity, gradualism, and the role of natural selection in effecting change. He examines the ideological opposition that these theories engendered and places them in modern perspective. Mayr also reminds us that, despite Darwin's title, he never really resolved the issue of speciation. Taking his title from Darwin's phrase, Mayr has perchance misled us. Unlike his distinguished predecessor, who described his own work, quite accurately, as "one long argument," Mayr has very concisely presented the essence of *his* argument in a slim volume: a strong and persuasive statement. Ernst Mayr is among the very few who could have written this book since it emerges from a lifetime of research, synthesis, and constructive intellectual debate about what Darwin said and what evolutionary theory is.

The Christian Gauss Award

CHAUCER AND THE SUBJECT OF HISTORY. *Lee Patterson. University of Wisconsin Press. $45. Paper, $14.95.*

Citation: "Here is God's plenty," John Dryden said of his Chaucer modernizations, the *Fables*, in 1700. Dr. Lee Patterson's *Chaucer and the Subject of History* is a book of such scope, precision, learning, and understanding that Dryden's compliment to Chaucer would not be out of place if applied to this work of scholarship. Here is plenty: plenty for the social historian, for the student of comparative literature, for the scholar of cultures—plenty for that elusive individual thought by some to be extinct, but whose existence Christian Gauss himself believed in, the general educated reader. The book is both synchronic and diachronic: solidly based in traditional literary and historical scholarship but also answering to the concerns of 1992. It concludes with a quotation by Primo Levi: "It is better to renounce revealed truths, even if they exalt us by their splendor. . . . It is better to content oneself with other more modest and less exciting truths, those one acquires painfully, little by little and without shortcuts, with study, discussion, and reasoning, those that can be verified and demonstrated." This is the standard that Professor Patterson has adopted and met in this book.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award

THE RADICALISM OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. *Gordon S. Wood. Knopf. $27.*

Citation: In awarding the Emerson Prize to Gordon S. Wood's *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, we honor an extraordinarily skillful reconstruction of the perspectives of a former age. Although historians do many other useful things toward repossessing the past, it seems that the efforts of the craft as a whole are most essentially directed to what this book represents: the gathering of many strands, from a great fund of learning, into a unified picture of how people in the past saw their world and shaped it—in the image of their vision, yes, but also, through the subtler action of visions, in ways they never dreamt. Articulation of such a historical picture is necessarily a literary achievement. In this award we recognize the depth of Wood's historical understanding, but in equal measure the lucidity and grace of his writing. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* is a gift to our American culture as well as an exemplary work of scholarship.

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of ratification and authority" and all the other pieties one might have hoped would be confined to the professoriate on this side of the ocean. (One wonders if even the *Field Day* editors have been so infected with insecurity about the Irish capacity for analytical thought that they think they need to talk like that to be intellectually respectable.)

Indeed, this is not so much an anthology per se as a textbook, a fact that becomes disheartenningly apparent the minute we open it: each squarish page has two columns of print, textbook-style, with priggish footnotes at the bottom that suggest that the intended audience for the book is, say, community college students in Racine, Wisconsin. Unlikely though it seems that a four-thousand-page anthology of Irish writing will ever be used in such a setting, why else advise the reader to "note the symbolism here," or feel the need to explain what a swastika is, who the Little Corsican is, what a Gorgon is, where the line "To be or not to be" comes from?

And why relegate all the lively gossip about the authors to tiny print in the biographical notes at the end of each section, while filling many of the long introductions to the sections with ponderous analysis? Surely any "common reader" would be interested to learn that the novelist Francis Stuart was married to Maud Gonne's daughter (the very one Yeats proposed to after being turned down by the mother for years) and became a Nazi sympathizer; or that the father of the eighteenth-century novelist Maria Edgeworth had twenty-three children. Instead, the essay on Edgeworth's work tells us only that Edgeworth père had "essentially rational and proto-utilitarian interests."

Still, these are minor irritations; a much more serious consequence of the editors' joyless approach becomes apparent when we start reading the translations of Irish poetry that have been made specifically for the anthology. Here, for example, are the first four verses of a rendering made sixty years ago, by the great scholar and translator Robin Flower, of a ninth-century poem (one of the most famous items of monkish marginalia):

> I and Pangur Ban my cat,
> 'Tis a like task we are at:
> Hunting mice is his delight,
> Hunting words I sit all night.
>
> Better far than praise of men
> 'Tis to sit with book and pen;
> Pangur bears me no ill will,
> He too plies his simple skill.
>
> 'Tis a merry thing to see
> At our tasks how glad are we,
> When at home we sit and find
> Entertainment to our mind.
>
> Oftentimes a mouse will stray
> In the hero Pangur's way;
> Oftentimes my keen thought set
> Takes a meaning in its net.

Now here is the translation that appears in *The Field Day Anthology*:

> Myself and White Pangur,
> each pursues his own calling,
> when I'm engaged on my craft,
> he's intent on hunting.
>
> Better to me than all fame
> To be with my book in quiet concentration;
> White Pangur does not envy me,
> he loves his own preoccupation.
>
> It is never tiresome
> when we're together in our dwelling;
> we both have something—an endless sport—
> on which to exercise our quickness.
>
> Sometimes by dint of feats of valour
> a mouse is trapped within his net,
> while into my net there drops
> some knotty rule of abstruse meaning.

The first thing that strikes one on reading those two versions is that Robin Flower's affords pleasure; it is memorable; it gives a sense of the lilt and wit of the original—for the original is indeed witty, and it rhymes. (Many thanks to Michael Timpson for patiently answering my questions about translation and various other matters, and for all the revelatory remarks he made in the course of our conversations.) *The Field Day*'s version gives no sense whatsoever of the poem's playfulness; instead, it is what the Irish call a "Civil Service translation," a perfect term for the rendering of live Irish into dead English.

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Surely only a bureaucrat—or an academic—could come up with a phrase like "some knotty rule of abstruse meaning." And all the translations here have the same flavor. It's impossible to see how the editors could have believed they were improving on Flower's translation of this or various other Irish poems—or on Kuno Meyer's translations, or David Greene's, or Myles Dillon's. Either they have no judgment at all (in which case they shouldn't be compiling such an anthology), or they are grimly determined not to let the reader enjoy himself too much.

Certainly the introductions to the various sections, with very few exceptions, seem designed to kill off all possible enjoyment. In the essay on Wilde and Shaw, for example, we find *The Importance of Being Earnest* described as

> a satire on the manic Victorian urge to antithesis. Wilde's is an art of inversion [rather an unfortunate choice of words, one would have thought], where each side exemplifies qualities that we would normally expect in its opposite, as every dichotomy dichotomizes . . . Jack and Algy's cynicism is seen to be a mere front for an unquenchable openness to new experience, while the apparent innocence of the country Canon Chasuble is seen to conceal a more sinister kind of knowingness.

What is this all about? Apart from the absurdity of imputing a "sinister kind of knowingness" to silly old Dr. Chasuble, how is it possible for anyone to be so solemn and, yes, earnest about what is probably the most perfect example of pure wit in the language? (The footnotes here are also remarkable. Algie says, "When I am in trouble, eating is the only thing that consoles me," and the note reads, "Cursed with a gargantuan appetite and an ungainly body, Wilde was fascinated by the appeal of food to the insecure." Jack confesses to Lady Bracknell that "I was . . . well, I was found . . . in a handbag . . . in the cloak room at Victoria Station" and the fine print tells us, "The notion of the self-invented man pervades the writings of Shaw, Nietzsche, Yeats and Joyce. Where nineteenth-century authors emphasized the establishment of parental lineage . . . modernists preferred to disrupt all ideas of chronological progress.")

Much of the discussion of Wilde is taken up with proving that he remained essentially Irish despite his apparent transformation into an Englishman—"the ease with which Wilde effected the transition from stage Irishman to stage Englishman was his ultimate comment on the hollowness of the antithesis"—yet nothing gets said directly about what would seem to be the most unmistakably Irish quality in his best work: its radical subversiveness, its mocking irreverence for everything the Victorian English took most seriously.

Similarly, the discussion of Joyce is couched as an attempt to prove his essential Irishness—something it's hard to imagine anyone calling into question.

> [Joyce] discovered that the form of Ireland's desire for centrality was merely a symptom of its anxiety about peripherality. . . . Ireland is not, in this light, a peripheral culture, but a central one masked in peripherality. The aim, then, politically and aesthetically, is to unmask that culture and demonstrate its otherness in relation to England. . . . [The language of *Finnegans Wake*] is a demonstration of the Babel that the monoglot empire produces in its conquered territories, a reverse translation of the single imperial language into all its contributory parts, as well as a rewriting of that language in terms of the history of the country that had consistently found cultural ways and means to disclaim the reality of political and economic subjugation. . . . It is therefore instructive to see Joyce's fiction in conjunction with his political writings.

Yet is this really what makes Joyce such an Irish writer? Apart from the embarrassingly obvious fact that, in his exile, he reconstructed Dublin stone by stone, or that his treatment of language was itself a form of subversion, isn't Frank O'Connor's claim that his was a "magical approach to language," and that "in Joyce the change in the idea of style from one of a relationship between the writer and reader to one of a relationship between writer and object implies the mystery of transubstantiation" more enlightening? Mightn't his very Irish brand of Catholicism have something to do with it?

In an essay called "Constructing the Canon: Versions of National Identity"—surprisingly, one of the most readable introductions here—Luke Gibbons of Dublin City University makes the wry point that, during the centuries of oppression by the English, the Irish judged not only their fellow countrymen's literary

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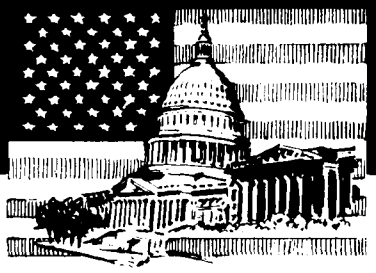

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products but even their geological and economic theories according to where they "stood on the unfinished business of the national question" and how far they "lent themselves to the growth of self-reliance and national esteem . . . as if the interests of the nation and universal reason could only converge." The editors of *The Field Day Anthology* often seem to be applying a similar criterion (although there are certainly exceptions, including Augustine Martin of University College, Dublin, who writes about "Prose Fiction 1880–1945"; Terence Brown, of Trinity College, Dublin, writing on the Counter-Revival; and J. C. C. Mays, of the University of York, in his consideration of Samuel Beckett). But in their case, it is the interests of the nation and the tenets of political correctness whose convergence they feel should be complete—and a certain anxiety creeps into their tone when such is not the case.

Thus, the poet Seamus Heaney, in his introduction to the poetry of Yeats, feels compelled to defend him from those who object to "his espousal of an essentially feudal vision in politics and culture . . . and his momentary attraction to Italian fascism in the 1930s" and who "question the good of being influenced by a poetry so unready to engage sympathetically with the circumstances of life in a bourgeois democracy." Tellingly, the defense Heaney offers is that Yeats's "commitments [to the Irish Literary Revival] were selfless and disciplined" and that "It was Yeats' ambition that his work should have a fortifying effect upon his subsequent readership." This sounds a little as though we are to forgive Yeats his political incorrectness because his intentions were honorable (and so, presumably, it's all right to be "influenced by [his] poetry," whatever that may mean) rather than because he was the greatest poet of the century. Auden's remark in his elegy on Yeats seems more to the point:

> Time that pardoned Paul Claudel
> Pardons him for writing well.

Many Irish, of course, have always felt ambivalent toward their famous Anglo bard, regarding him as not only an anti-democrat but also something of a pseudo-Irishman (despite

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his passion for the ancient Irish legends and the folktales of the West country, Yeats never learned the Irish language, saying it was "beyond the capabilities of the human brain"). But Heaney's defensiveness about him seems to be of a different kind, as when he apologizes for the fact that "we certainly do not encounter in [Yeats's] work any image of life's surfaces in our world of consumer capitalism and clamant Marxism" and argues, a little implausibly, that "there is surely political meaning in his sense of life as an abounding conflict of energies." Quite apart from the question of whether this is a valid criterion for judging poetry, it is mystifying that anyone should feel the need to vindicate Yeats as a political poet in these terms—as though his poems about Parnell, about O'Leary, about the state of Ireland didn't count somehow. It could be that their glorification of the aristocracy and the note of reproach in many of these poems render them suspect in some circles, but no one, surely, could object to "Easter 1916":

> Too long a sacrifice
> Can make a stone of the heart.
> O when may it suffice?
> That is Heaven's part, our part
> To murmur name upon name,
> As a mother names her child
> When sleep at last has come
> On limbs that had run wild. . . .
> And what if excess of love
> Bewildered them till they died?
> I write it out in a verse—
> MacDonagh and MacBride
> And Connolly and Pearse
> Now and in time to be,
> Wherever green is worn,
> Are changed, changed utterly:
> A terrible beauty is born.

Again, it almost seems as though Heaney has to find some esoteric way in which Yeats was political in order not to be reduced to stating the obvious—or to dealing with the actual people and events that Yeats transformed into universal symbols.

Reading *The Field Day Anthology* makes one realize how little the so-called politicization of literature actually has to do with real politics. For it is not real politics that is at work in the essays here—not the sort of political impulse that made Yeats produce a great poetry of elegy and of celebration, of commemoration and scolding, or even the sort that was at work in the grand subversions of Joyce and Wilde. To these academics, politics is a matter of concepts that have been defined for them before they ever turn to the works at hand—concepts such as hegemony and oppression, both of which have certainly affected Irish writing, but not in this bloodless way. "A critic," said T. S. Eliot in another context, "must have a very highly developed sense of fact." Too often, that seems to be missing here. Nor can one ascribe the lack to some romantic Celtic weakness for abstraction, since, alas, the abstractions offered us are anything but romantic. A little revolutionary fervor might have been welcome.

And finally, if the editors were so concerned with political correctness, where are the women? Specifically, what happened to Mary Colum, the remarkable critic and memoirist, and how explain the mysterious absence of the novelist Molly Keane, when hundreds of pages are devoted to mediocre contemporary poets? Perhaps the decadence of Keane's upper-class characters was considered too objectionable, or her want of moral solemnity was deemed un-Irish, according to the editors' definition of the term. So we get an excerpt from Bernadette Devlin's self-righteous autobiography instead. But in the end, one suspects, the wickedly funny Molly Keane will ascend into Irish literary Heaven "for writing well," and Bernadette Devlin will be merely a footnote, in very small print.

Vile Body

EVELYN WAUGH: THE LATER YEARS, 1939–1966. *By Martin Stannard. Norton. $29.95.*

Reviewed by JEFFREY MEYERS

Modern literary biography tends to flow into two main streams. There is the encyclopedic compilation of facts, industriously gath-

✪ JEFFREY MEYERS has in recent years published biographies of Lawrence, Conrad, and Poe and is now completing a life of Scott Fitzgerald.

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ered by American academics, in works like Baker's *Hemingway*, Blotner's *Faulkner*, Karl's *Conrad*, and Bruccoli's *Fitzgerald*. There is also the analytic and interpretive life—exemplified by Marchand's *Byron*, Ellmann's *Joyce*, Edel's *James*, and Painter's *Proust*—which reveals significant patterns and presents a coherent interpretation of these facts. As George Painter has observed:

> The biographer's task is to . . . discover, beneath the mask of the artist's every-day, objective life, the secret from which he extracted his work; show how, in the apparently sterile persons and places of that external life, he found the hidden, universal meanings which are the themes of his book; and reveal the drama of the contrast and interaction between his daily existence and his incommensurably deeper life as a creator.

Martin Stannard's second volume of Waugh's life is much more mature, self-confident, and thoughtful than the first, which appeared in 1986. He has learned through experience and reflection during the intervening years to move from a sluggish chronicle to a penetrating, at times depressing but always fascinating, narrative. This handsome volume—with an increasingly rare full-cloth binding—is largely based on Waugh's diary and letters. None of Waugh's children is mentioned in the acknowledgments, and the family seems to have sensed a lack of sympathy and withdrawn its cooperation after the disappointing first volume. Christopher Sykes, Waugh's friend and first biographer, was genuinely fond of Waugh. But Stannard, like so many biographers whose own lives have been devoured by a decade's work on their subject, has become distinctly hostile. Waugh surely had the most difficult personality of any writer in the modern period; even his contemporary epigone, Kingsley Amis, is not nearly as unpleasant.

When discussing *The Loved One*, Stannard notes its resemblance to the lurid surrealism in the novels of Nathanael West. But Waugh has much more in common with the life and work of another American contemporary, Scott Fitzgerald. Both Fitzgerald and Waugh were socially insecure, failed as undergraduates, were disastrous soldiers, suffered desperately unhappy marriages, had troubled relations with their children, wrote for Hollywood, spent prodigally, lived luxuriously, and finally became depressed alcoholics. Both writers portrayed school and university life, were fascinated by the glamour and emptiness of the aristocratic rich, described the drinking parties of flappers on Long Island and of bright young things in Mayfair. They recorded the social nuances of the period, defined the sophisticated rebellion of the postwar generation, and in their social satires captured the joyful spirit of the 1920s and the disillusionment of the following decade. Both were Catholic writers and innate conservatives who expressed the theme of disappointed idealism. Fitzgerald was as anti-English as Waugh was anti-American. *The Crack-Up* (1945) and *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* (1957) contained searing self-indictments and shocking personal revelations about their mental breakdowns.

Stannard's second volume begins with Waugh's improbable career in the British army. It began promisingly when he was one of a dozen men, selected from two thousand candidates, for a commission in the marines. But it soon became apparent, in his scorn for the soldiers under his command and his fractious insolence to his superiors, that he was, though eager to engage in combat, eminently unsuited to the rigors and discipline of military life. His landing at Dakar was canceled. He experienced, as a commando, a humiliating defeat when the British were driven off the island of Crete. He was more impatient than Moses to get out of Egypt. His barracks life in Scotland was "one of squalor, idleness & loneliness." To relieve the boredom he grew a repulsive beard, which gave him the interest of a flower or a potted plant. He made two parachute jumps, stepping from the noisy plane "into perfect silence and solitude and apparent immobility in bright sunshine above the treetops," but broke his leg on the second try.

Habitually intoxicated and amusingly insubordinate, he cheekily asked one commander if it were true that "in the Rumanian army no one beneath the rank of Major is permitted to use lipstick." Reprimanded by a general for being drunk in the officers' mess, he tartly replied that "I could not change the habits of a lifetime for a whim of his."

The greatest wartime fiasco occurred when Waugh was sent with Randolph Churchill as liaison officer to the Yugoslav Partisans. Ac-

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cording to Waugh, Churchill's "American slang, his coughing and farting, made him a poor companion in wet weather"; and later Waugh caustically joked, after his old friend had lost a lung in an operation for suspected cancer, that the doctors had removed "the only part of Randolph that was not malignant." With exquisite diplomacy, Waugh insisted on referring to Tito as a woman, strongly objected to the Communists' treatment of Croatian Catholics (who were collaborating with the Nazi conquerors), and, after falsifying evidence in an official report, was expelled from Dubrovnik for interference in civil affairs. Cured of the illusion that he was a man of action, Waugh finally realized that he was "so unpopular as to be unemployable" in the army.

Stannard is especially perceptive about Waugh's relations, after he returned from the war, with his older brother Alec, the popular novelist; with his second wife, Laura; with his six children; and with his loyal friend Graham Greene. Alec, who both respected and resented Evelyn's far greater talent, patiently tolerated his outrageous behavior and peremptory demands. Evelyn always considered Alec "to be hopelessly second-rate: a bad husband and a bad writer, salving a bad conscience with bad philosophy." Toward the end of his life, when Alec confided that he was going to marry his longtime mistress outside the Church and asked his forgiveness, Evelyn, who had once arranged, through influential connections in the Vatican, a bogus annulment to his own first marriage, refused to respond and subsequently referred to Alec as "my revolting brother."

Waugh's relations with his pinched, homely, dull, and long-suffering second wife, who was redeemed in his eyes by her aristocratic ancestry, were also severely strained. But she kept the marriage together by accepting all responsibility for the household and family, and by countering his deep depressions, fear of failure, and persecution mania with meek obedience, tolerance of his megalomania, and absolute belief in his literary greatness.

Stannard never fully explains why Waugh had six offspring. He was indifferent to their birth, positively disliked small children, refused to spend much time with them until they had grown up, and was frequently an overbearing father. When his infant daughter died a few days after birth in 1940, he coldly noted: "I saw her when she was dead . . . a blue, slatey colour. Poor little girl, she was not wanted." Three years later he recorded in his diary: "I prefer my books to my son. . . . [T]he truth is that a child is easily replaced while a book destroyed is utterly lost." He assiduously avoided family Christmas celebrations, and showed no apparent love for his eldest son, Auberon. When Auberon, on national service in Cyprus, accidentally fired a machine gun into himself and was considered close to death, Waugh refused to visit him and told a friend: "I shall go out to travel home with Laura if he dies." When his son survived the ordeal and was sent back to England for a melancholy convalescence, Waugh refused to risk depression by seeing him in hospital. Asked what it was like to be the child of a famous author, his youngest son, James, replied with solemn honesty: "You have no conception. It is utter hell."

Waugh's brilliant contemporaries at Oxford—Harold Acton, Anthony Powell, Cyril Connolly, and Graham Greene—were, with Nancy Mitford and Diana Cooper (both of whom he tried to bully into the Church) among his closest friends. Though Greene and Waugh had antithetical social and political ideas, they shared the guilt-ridden Catholicism of the convert (Greene skeptical, Waugh dogmatic) and had immense respect for each other's work.

Waugh became a Catholic in 1930, but his religious conversion failed to reform his life and character. Though capable of punctilious and pedantic piety (he used scales to measure his food during Lent and bribed nuns to pray for good weather on grand occasions), he continued his brutal behavior and drunken binges as if there had been no change in his spiritual life. When friends remonstrated about his gratuitous cruelty ("I love you," Lady Diana wrote, "& yet you have the power to hurt me so"), he defensively retorted: "You have no idea how much nastier I would be if I was not a Catholic. Without supernatural aid I would hardly be a human being."

Though Stannard's research has been exhaustive, I can complete one lapse in his thoroughness. He notes that Waugh met J. F. Powers in St. Paul on his way back from Los Angeles in 1949 and had reviewed Powers's *Prince of Darkness* in the *Month* that year, but

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he does not describe Powers's austere character and dry wit or mention that he is the most important Catholic novelist in American literature. In 1984 Powers (who still lives near St. Paul) told me that Waugh had stopped to see him in *Chicago*. They had mutual respect for each other's work (Powers had favorably reviewed *The Loved One* for *Commonweal* in 1948), and Waugh, fourteen years older, had influenced Powers's novels. Waugh inscribed several books to Powers, and later wrote in *Helena*: "Bet you one dollar you won't finish this." When a journalist friend of Powers rang up for an interview, Waugh plaintively asked: "Do you want me to do this as a favor to you?" and was grateful when Powers relieved him of this duty. Powers, who had expected a great deal from Waugh, found his conversation somewhat disappointing. Exhausted perhaps by his American journey, Waugh seemed much more interested in food and wine than in discussing serious subjects.

Waugh loved lost causes and loathed most aspects of the modern world. He admired hierarchical society, derided the welfare state, supported censorship of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and advocated the death penalty. He was strongly opposed to the reforms of Vatican II that, he felt, would reduce the Mass to a "meal at which the priest is merely the waiter." At the end of his life the man who was terrified of boredom realized that he himself had become the kind of bore he had always dreaded and despised. He spent his empty days consoled by crossword puzzles and stupefied by a weekly consumption of thirty cigars, three bottles of gin, seven bottles of wine, forty grains of sodium amytal, and a bottle of paraldehyde. With unintentional irony, Stannard reports that the family told friends that Waugh "died as he would have chosen." In fact, he died in squalid circumstances: in his toilet, sprawled face down with a gash on his forehead and (I suspect) with his trousers at his feet.

Waugh's three contemporary literary heroes each represented a weakness in his own work —Belloc: dogmatic Catholicism; Beerbohm: precious dandyism; Wodehouse: schoolboy humor. Waugh's late pious works—*Helena* (1950) and *The Life of Ronald Knox* (1959)—were his worst failures. But *Brideshead Revisited* (1945) was a triumphant success, *The Loved One* (1948) a brilliantly morbid satire, and his World War II trilogy *Sword of Honour* (1952–61)—with its traditional ideas of honor and illusions of chivalry, symbolized by an ancient family, a country seat, and the Catholic Church—is the contemporary equivalent of Ford Madox Ford's great tetralogy about World War I, *Parade's End*. We must finally, as Auden said of Kipling, pardon Waugh for writing well and must agree with Graham Greene's judgment that Waugh, with all his faults, was the greatest novelist of his generation.

How to Write an Essay

COMPLETE COLLECTED ESSAYS. *By V. S. Pritchett. Random House. $35.*

Reviewed by ALAN RUTENBERG

In an essay on the early Dostoevsky, V. S. Pritchett considers a work by the now-fashionable critic Mikhail Bakhtin: "Bakhtin takes a long, effusive, learned, flight into the history of the scandalous carnival tradition and is immensely suggestive. It is delightful to see a scholar going too far. . . . I enjoy the scholarly trapeze act but I don't believe a word of it." This celebrated British writer of short stories, novels, memoirs, and travel books, himself as old as the century, remains one of our most eminent literary critics, but he is decidedly not a scholar nor does he make scholarly claims on our attention. Our assent to Pritchett's scrupulous, acute, animated judgment depends rather on the subtle authority of his voice.

V. S. Pritchett's critical temperament is appreciative and inclusive. Unlike his contemporaries F. R. Leavis and Cyril Connolly, he formulates neither a highly distinctive moral or aesthetic doctrine nor a small, exclusionary, personal canon. Perhaps his generous temperament removes Pritchett from consideration as a major critic, but he does offer instead a fruitful series of lucid enthusiasms and felicitous individual judgments.

In this extravagantly thick collection of the eight previous volumes of his essays, pub-

✪ ALAN RUTENBERG is a writer living in Chicago.

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lished between 1942 and 1990, Pritchett is intelligent, skeptical, tolerant, an immensely valuable instructor in the European literature of the past three centuries, especially in English, French, and Russian fiction. While the majority of these essays appeared as leading literary articles in the *New Statesman*, the feeling they convey is not that of the standard reviewer. Pritchett's voice is personal and ruminative, curious and *sérieux*: it is the voice, preeminently, of the short-story writer. In fact these essays adhere closely to the instructions Chekhov provided, in an 1886 letter to his brother Mikhail, for writing a short story:

1. absence of lengthy verbiage of political-social-economic nature
2. total objectivity
3. truthful descriptions of persons and objects
4. extreme brevity
5. audacity and originality: avoid the stereotype
6. compassion

Absence of lengthy verbiage. Pritchett has acknowledged that Chekhov, Lawrence, and Hemingway are his masters, and their influence shines through in the vivid, rapid, personal prose of his essays. As he recounts in his memoirs, Pritchett had no university education, and his attitude toward academic prose, though amused and tolerant, is sharp. In an essay on Flaubert he writes, "Literary criticism does not add to its status by opening an intellectual hardware store," and he continues, apropos of Victor Brombert: "It is depressing to find so good a critic of Flaubert—of all people—scattering academic jargon and archaisms in his prose." On Frederick Karl's biography of Conrad, he announces: "Since I have nothing but admiration for Professor Karl's command of the living detail necessary for an exhaustive biography of 1,000 pages, I hate to see him making solemn and obsequious gestures to the academy."

In *Midnight Oil*, the second volume of his memoirs, Pritchett explains: "I had read widely but I had never 'done' Eng. Lit., French Lit., or Russian Lit. I had no critical doctrine—a shock later on to the platoons of New Critics and later regiments—for critical

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doctrine is of little interest to the novelist." He continues:

> I am appalled by the amount I have read. This reading has certainly distracted me from original work of my own: for myself—if not for the reader—one or two good stories are worth all the criticism in the world: the best criticism of a story is another story, of a play, another play. In my criticism, perhaps even more than my stories, I am self-portrayed. When I re-read those essays written in such numbers over the last thirty years, I am surprised to see how much they are pitted with personal experience, and how much reaction to life itself, either nettled or expansive, has been packed into an epigram or an aside. In penetrating to the conflicts of authors, I have discovered and reflected on my own.

A sampler of Pritchett's personal epigrams and asides might include, from an essay on Gibbon, "Sooner or later, the great men turn out to be all alike. They never stop working. They never lose a minute. It is very depressing." On Swift: "It strikes one that Swift is an instance of the infantilism of genius: he was a self-regarding child-egotist all his life. The will to instant power may not succeed, but intellectually it is devastating."

Total objectivity. Of Cyril Connolly, Pritchett writes: "It is very odd indeed that, except for a reference to Tolstoy, he has nothing to say . . . on the Russian novelists, little about the Victorians. He was thinking only of his English contemporaries—Forster, Joyce, Firbank, Virginia Woolf, Lawrence—and always under the shadow of Flaubert." Pritchett himself resembles his own portrait of Graham Greene: "Greene has a marked loyalty to writers who have influenced him and to those who are out of fashion. He is free of the snobbery that pretends it has had no time for the juvenile or second rate." Pritchett, too, is attentive to both major and minor writers: "I have often thought that professors of English Lit. should take time off from the central glooms of genius and consider those lesser entertainers whose works are deeply suggestive." His objectivity extends even to those works he describes as the "standard novels":

> We are up against the carelessness, the lethargy, the enormous bad taste of genius, its liability to accident, its slovenly and majestic conceit that anything will do. *Don Quixote* falls in half, the *Chartreuse* and *Le Rouge et le Noir* go shockingly to pieces, Tolstoy stuffs a history book into *War and Peace,* Fielding and Dickens pad and Dostoevsky wanders into ideological journalism.

In an essay on George Meredith, he insists that "we cannot have the virtues of a writer without his vices: the fact is that Meredith's virtues are all in his personal mobility, his aplomb and his presumption. His stories do not progress; they are waltzed with violence from line to line, and chapter to chapter." Of Dickens he writes: "I swallow Dickens whole and put up with the indigestion."

Pritchett also allows his opinions to change. On Kipling, for example, he writes that

> in the Thirties, it was easy to tie his politics round his neck and sink him. Long after that, it was a shock (when we opened one of his books) to discover that his politics might not have been as important as we had made out; that his real themes were anterior and that he had an independent gaiety and authority in his sentences suggesting a much darker experience than the political.

Acknowledging such shocks, Pritchett opens many books to readers of his criticism, but his objectivity does not preclude preferences. In English literature he favors the "savage and vital indignation of the eighteenth century, its moral dogmatism, its body full of laughter and its roars of pain" as well as "the sadistic revival in English comic and satirical writing—the movement suggested by Stevenson, Wilde, Beerbohm, Firbank and Evelyn Waugh." He is fascinated by the psychology of French romanticism: Stendhal, Constant, and Mérimée distill "the sense of general law upon which all the great French novelists have built, and which distinguishes them from those of other countries. They are the lawyers of the passions."

Most of all Pritchett is enchanted with Russian literature, which he is able to read only in translations, favoring those by Constance Garnett. In the Russian novels, "the day, not the insistence of the plot or purpose, is the melodic bar. . . . In seeing people in terms of their anonymous days, the Russians achieved, by a paradox, a sense of timelessness in their books." Pritchett pursues this theme in essays on the major and minor Russian masters of

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the nineteenth century: Aksakov, Chekhov, Dostoevsky, Gogol, Goncharov, Lermontov, Leskov, Pushkin, Shchedrin, Tolstoy, and Turgenev. He continues, "What gives those novels their power, and these persons their gift of moving us, is something which comes from a profound sense of a presence haunting the day. There lies on those persons . . . the shadow of a fate more richly definitive than the fate of any individual human being. Their feet stand in time and in history."

Truthful descriptions of persons and objects. As a craftsman Pritchett has an alert curiosity about the lives of other writers, and many of these essays originated as reviews of important biographies, including Leon Edel on Henry James, Henri Troyat on Tolstoy, and Joseph Frank on Dostoevsky. Pritchett himself has written biographies of moderate length on Balzac, Turgenev, and Chekhov, and he is critical of the kind of textual criticism that "puritanically denies side glances at biography, social influences, etc., and rather hypocritically assumes that we have had these necessities privately at the back door." Along with biographies, Pritchett considers letters and diaries, journals and notebooks; these biographical archives elicit some of his closest, most intuitively penetrating reading.

Of the *Notebooks* of Henry James, Pritchett writes: "James's method is uncommon among writers and explains why his *Notebooks* are more fertile than most others we have been allowed to see." He then explains, in a manner available only to a fellow craftsman and professional, the quality and advantage of James's method: "A full, superfluous, self-communing phrase like, 'Might not something be done . . .' slows down the bright idea, roots it in the mind, gives it soil. . . . The slower the process of note-taking the more likely it is to have sap and growth." Pritchett concludes, with the solemnity of a Joseph Conrad: "For other novelists the value of Henry James's *Notebooks* is immense and to brood over them a major experience."

Extreme brevity. Few of these two hundred and three essays exceed ten pages. Each displays the mastery that Pritchett finds in the short stories of Kipling, "intensifying the subject, stamping a climate on it, getting at the essence of it."

Audacity and originality: avoid the stereotype. While Pritchett is a connoisseur of the English comic tradition, from its eighteenth-century origins in Swift and Fielding and Sterne to the perfect minor art of Edwardian comic writing, in his most original (and perhaps most characteristic) reading he discovers the comic in unexpected places. Dostoevsky provides the most vivid example: "The conventional comic writer draws his characters to a single pattern of wit or makes the world a convenience for his joke. Dostoevsky does not do this. He is one of the great comic writers because, however satirically he may begin, he always grows into humor, and the humor is not imposed on life but arises out of it."

Further examples include the Polish writer Bruno Schulz, whom Pritchett depicts concisely: "Distinctly an intellectual, he translated Kafka's *The Trial* and was deep in *Joseph and His Brothers.*" He finds Schulz's *Street of Crocodiles* "a masterpiece of comic writing, grave yet demented, domestically plain yet poetic, exultant and forgiving, marvelously inventive, shy and never raw." Kafka's letters he describes as "a series of self-portraits desperate and courageous, always eager and warm in feeling; the self is lit by fantasy and, of course, by drollery. . . . The letters to women have even something of Swift's advisory playfulness." And of Samuel Beckett, whom he calls "a modern Oblomov," he writes: "He is a considerable, muttering, comic writer, and although he conveys unbearable pain, he also conveys the element of sardonic tenacity and danger that lies at the heart of the comic gift."

Compassion. The unexpected hero of this entire volume is Italo Svevo, the author of *The Confessions of Zeno.* Pritchett pays special attention to the authors of minor classics, and in this he echoes Montaigne, who wrote in the essay "Of Experience" that greatness of soul "regards as great whatever is adequate, and shows its elevation by liking moderate things better than eminent ones."

In one of his two essays on Svevo, Pritchett writes, after describing certain excesses of the great psychological novels: "To those who are in danger of reacting too violently against the great botanists of our hidden flora, I recommend the cure offered by the works of Italo Svevo. Here is laughter at last. Here Hamlet raises a smile, Oedipus is teased away from his fate like some figure of light opera." However, on the character of Zeno, he notes:

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"Zeno appears to be a weak and vacillating madhatter . . . but, in fact, the abiding impression he leaves is one of moral gravity." References to Svevo dot other of Pritchett's essays, making plain that, for him, Italo Svevo is, in a rough sense, his exemplary modern writer.

In a tribute to Gerald Brenan, intellectual diarist, confessional autobiographer, interpreter of Spanish civilization, and his closest friend for forty years, Pritchett identifies Svevo as a talking author very close to Brenan: "Indeed I often confused my friend with him." V. S. Pritchett, too, is a talking author, addressing the common reader as a civilized friend, recommending, with grave and festive wit, that we too open many books.

Jewish Problem

SIMONE WEIL: PORTRAIT OF A SELF-EXILED JEW. *By Thomas Nevin. University of North Carolina Press. $32.50.*

Reviewed by ANN M. BEGLEY

It has been nearly half a century since the French philosopher and mystic Simone Weil died in an English sanatorium, at age thirty-four, of self-imposed starvation, owing partly to an eating disorder of many years, partly to a desire to share the deprivations of her countrymen left behind in France, and partly to her asceticism. Hospitalized for tuberculosis, no longer able to take food, she refused to be nourished artificially.

Controversies began immediately upon her death and continue to rage about virtually all aspects of her life and thought. Was this unorthodox and challenging writer a genius or a fool, mystic or psychotic, anarchist or brilliant political and social theorist? She has been called many things from saint to pervert, including—most recently, by George Steiner—a transcendent schlemiel. What is noteworthy is that not even her severest critics question her absolute intellectual integrity.

During the course of her short life, Weil published a number of articles in periodicals

✪ ANN M. BEGLEY's study of Simone Weil's life has been published in *European Writers: The Twentieth Century.*

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of limited circulation on such subjects as France's colonial policy, the quantum theory, the trade unionist movement, political and social oppression, the *Iliad,* and the Cathars of southern France who were massacred in the twelfth century. It wasn't, however, until 1947 with the posthumous printing of *La Pesanteur et la grâce (Gravity and Grace)*—a collection of meditations, primarily metaphysical, extracted from her numerous notebooks where they were jotted down presumably with no intent of publication—that Weil first gained general public interest. The publication of selected letters, essays, notes, social and political writings that followed brought her international acclaim. A critical edition of her complete works, in the process of being printed by Gallimard, will extend to fifteen volumes.

The arresting and sometimes startling, even unsettling, views she expresses in a sharp, lucid, elegant, classic style alternately fascinate and disturb readers of all ideological persuasions. Her voice is so compelling that a certain mystique has developed and continues to grow around her person as well as her oeuvre. The critical literature, already massive, is mushrooming. The reactions to her work range from an unquestioning, hagiographic adulation that labels her the author of infallible pronouncements to an outright denial of the validity of every aspect of her thought—both positions reflecting the acceptance or repudiation of the authenticity of her mystical revelations and her extreme and provocative polemics.

Thomas Nevin's *Simone Weil: Portrait of a Self-Exiled Jew,* the latest study of Weil's writings—some of which have not yet been published or translated—has engendered yet another controversy. From first to last, Nevin informs us, his concern is not, as with so many scholars before him, with Weil as a Christian or Christian manquée but rather with Weil as a Jew. Despite the fact that she did not consider herself a Jew, was raised without religious practice of any kind by parents who were freethinkers, had no attraction for Judaism and adamantly placed herself within the Christian "inspiration," Weil's identity, Nevin contends, was nonetheless principally that of a Jew—"not in any racial sense (which we have learned to regard as spurious) or in a religious sense (Judaism is more than a religion, and her upbringing was nonobservant) but in a historical sense." Like innumerable other Jews who were nonobservant or freethinking, he explains, Weil was a "catastrophe Jew," a "Jew astray from Judaism or forgetful of it, to whom fate gave a harsh awakening." Strident voices have been raised in response, declaring that she could not have strayed from what she had never been part of, she could not have forgotten what she was not acquainted with.

By "harsh awakening," Nevin means, of course, the anti-Semitic laws enacted in France pursuant to the German invasion. Forbidden to teach under the Vichy "Statute on Jews," Weil wrote a letter of protest to the Secretary of State for Public Education, "arguing fantastically," Nevin remarks, "that she was not a Jew." Yes, but Nevin seemingly misses the irony in Weil's response: "I do not know the definition of the word 'Jew'; this subject was never part of my curriculum of studies. True, the statute says whoever has had three Jewish grandparents is to be considered a Jew; but this clarification only pushes the difficulty back two generations." Weil was not trying to persuade the authorities to change her official status; she was fully aware that this was not feasible. As Nevin himself points out, she was addressing herself to the "arbitrary and absurd character" of the directive. She wrote another letter in the same vein to the Commissioner for Jewish Affairs, reminding him that the government had neglected to give her the severance pay due her on being barred from a teaching post, adding ironically that this gave her the satisfaction of knowing that she played no part in the country's financial difficulties.

The question that Weil raises and that is raised in the mind of the reader is, What *is* a Jew? One who has a Jewish mother, according to Rabbinic Law. One who is perceived to be such by others, according to Sartre—an interesting definition but hardly a satisfying one.

One can change one's name, one's spouse, one's nationality, one's religion, but there are certain things, it is said, that cannot be changed. There are indelible marks that cannot be removed: a Catholic priest, for example, who has been laicized—or who has simply abandoned his office—will always be considered a priest by the Church; an Englishman who has become a naturalized citi-

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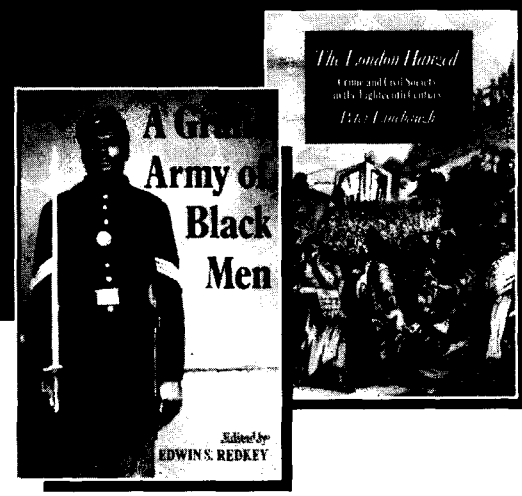

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zen of another country remains nonetheless, in the eyes of Britain, a subject of the United Kingdom; and, according to Nevin's premise (to be sure, he is not alone in holding it), someone with Jewish ancestral lineage is a Jew no matter how long and hard he may kick "against the pricks of Judaism."

On the other hand, the priest who has totally lost his faith will view ordination as nothing more than, perhaps, a beautiful ceremony; and the Englishman may insist, as he did in 1812, that he is no longer English but American. Weil maintained vehemently that she was fully assimilated into French culture, implicitly Catholic, and therefore not Jewish. Nevin holds that, having been born "a Jew by ancestral destiny," she did not have the freedom of choice in this matter, and that, in some atavistic way, she felt "the pull of the heritage she so insistently" disavowed. Writers as various as George Eliot and Bernard Malamud have wrestled with this question.

Weil's hostility to Judaism is well known. She penned a deluge of invectives against Israel (the term is being used as Weil and other religious writers employ it and not with reference to the modern state). T. S. Eliot, among others, views her castigation of Israel as that of a Hebrew prophet and points out that she was also severely critical of both the Catholic Church, to which she was clearly drawn, and France, for which she was willing to die.

Still, passionately solicitous of the oppressed, her voice was curiously mute when it came to the persecution of the Jews. Although she denounced an anti-Semitic program proposed for postwar France, she supported a proposal that would limit the number of Jews in administrative posts and looked forward to the day when French Jewry would be totally assimilated—suggesting that mixed marriages be encouraged and the children of such unions be raised as Christians. "This uncongenial subject," which is only occasionally addressed by scholars on Weil, Nevin observes, must "figure in any attempt at an honest, inclusive assessment of her thought." While warning the reader that the character of her statements concerning Judaism requires caution lest one presume she was anti-Semitic or take up a psychology of Jewish self-hatred and portray her as a victim, he suggests that, "aware of her family's Jewish roots, she may have felt a need to get free of them by condemnation."

Nevin argues further that the tendency to regard Weil "as some sort of Christian" because she often expressed her thoughts in the language of the Christian faith must be resisted. Although he does not deny her "deep relation" with Christ, he refuses to see it as central. Her Christ, he writes, was Marcion and her theology Eastern. "Why didn't she become a Christian?" he asks. Yet Weil states clearly that she had always thought of herself as such. What Nevin probably means is, Why didn't she formally join the Catholic Church, why didn't she ask for baptism? The multiple reasons are outlined by Weil in her letter to Father Perrin; she concludes that it was her vocation to love Christ from outside the Church. This raises the question: What is a Christian?

Striving to establish his thesis, Nevin mars his impressive scholarship (his discussion of the history of French labor is particularly rich) by making assertions that are supported by dubious evidence: he sees in Weil certain "Jewish traits" that are not at all convincing. For example, "vagabondage" is a questionable epithet for her, and it is equally applicable to a wide assortment of peoples. "By consistently going her own way," he writes, Weil was very Jewish—"there are no dogmas in Judaism." Although Weil said doctrines should be contemplated with love rather than affirmed, she herself espoused the dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the Eucharist.

"Her religious attitudes and beliefs," Nevin continues, "were substantially the product of the wartime." His claim is that it was only when she was forced to face the reality of her Jewishness during the Nazi occupation that Weil turned toward Eastern religions and a Hellenized Christianity to distance herself from her heritage. Yet before the Vichy years she had begun to attend mass, as Nevin himself notes. Further, before the "catastrophe," she had a series of mystical encounters, which Nevin describes as "aesthetic experiences." "Why did she keep this experience to herself for nearly five years?" he asks. It is a commonplace that mystics are reluctant to talk about their mystical encounters. "My secret to myself," said Bernard of Clairvaux.

In general, Nevin considers the designation

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of Simone Weil as a mystic to be one of the "unreflected and useless tags" that have been pinned on her. In the midst of a commentary on her fascination with fairy tales and immediately following a reference to Freudian clichés, he remarks that "she came to regard sexual metaphors as the legitimate property of mystical experience." The implication is clear, and it is not an uncommon one. It is important to note, however, that all mystics speak the same symbolic language. Such imagery is traceable to the popularity of the "Song of Songs." As Evelyn Underhill says, "Persons who imagine that the 'Spiritual Marriage' of Saint Catherine or Saint Teresa veils a perverted sexuality ... do but advertise their ignorance of the mechanism of the arts: like the lady who thought that Blake *must* be mad because he said that he had touched the sky with his finger." Addressing this issue, Weil wrote that to censure mystics because there is sexuality in the expression of their love of God is tantamount to reproving an artist for employing a material pigment to paint his picture: "What else does he have to paint with? What else does he have to love with?"

It is regrettable that Nevin is not better versed in mystical theology; his apparent lack of knowledge in this area has caused him to make a number of misreadings of Weil's thought: he attributes to her, for instance, a death wish that was "morbid and unhealthy" and suggests that her desire for conformity to the divine will reveals exclusively a Stoic resonance; his references to her reflections on suffering, the Holy Spirit, and what has come to be called her "doctrine of attention" tend to be misleading or inadequate.

Although there is no clear evidence that Simone Weil's consciousness "felt the pull of her heritage," it is difficult to deny the fact—as so many who admire her tend to—that when it came to Judaism, Weil had a blind spot or a prejudice, perhaps even a complex. Nor can it be denied that she had an affinity for Christianity—her own brand of Christianity, to be sure, one based on Greek thought and not Judaism. Scholars fail in their attempt to categorize Weil; both her life and her thought resist generic classification—whether primarily as a Jew as Nevin insists, or as a Christian or neo-Christian as others assert. As David McClellan has written, "She is intel-

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lectually stateless, a prophet without any country in which she can be sure of honour."

Simone Weil is one of the most controversial figures of our century. Charles de Gaulle dismissed her wartime proposals as those of a fool or a mad woman; Albert Camus insisted that her writings were pivotal to his own work; and Pope Paul VI maintained that she had a definitive influence on his life. As T. S. Eliot remarks in his introduction to *L'Enracinement (The Need for Roots,* 1949), "I cannot conceive of anybody's agreeing with all of her views or of not disagreeing violently with some of them." Nevin judiciously concludes that, while Weil's thinking is not without flaws, "such flaws do not detract from her stature." Readers, no matter how they regard her, are never left indifferent to her forceful voice.

The Trouble with Harry

LOVE'S STORY TOLD: A LIFE OF HENRY A. MURRAY. *By Forrest G. Robinson. Harvard University Press. $29.95.*

Reviewed by PAUL ROAZEN

A surprising feature of growing older is that it turns out that people one has met in real life appear increasingly in books. I was acquainted with Henry A. Murray only slightly, but to everyone connected with the post–World War II interdisciplinary department of social relations at Harvard he was known simply as "Harry." Even as far away as the government department there, where I taught despite rooted prejudices against psychology, Harry was a charismatic figure. He came from such a wealthy background, I was reliably informed, that if the Psychological Clinic he headed ever needed any special funds he was able to dip into his own bank account to make up the difference. Murray was obviously outside the mainstream of university appointments and received tenure relatively late in life. His name was vaguely associated with that of Carl G. Jung, but Murray was not known as a member of any given psychological school, except perhaps his own.

I formally interviewed him a couple of times in 1965 in connection with my work on Freud and his followers. Harry had seen Freud once in Vienna and had been a founding member of the Boston Psychoanalytic Society; he knew many of the early psychoanalysts, yet looked on them with a unique kind of detachment. I last saw him for dinner at his house in 1985, and I am glad to report that even in his early nineties he was able to hold forth and as host succeed in being the center of an evening's conversation at which many others were present. By then I had long since stopped taking notes in Harry's presence. In 1988 he died at the age of ninety-five.

I believe I already knew there was a more or less authorized biography being written about him, and when I saw a public notice from Forrest Robinson, looking for Murray correspondence, I sent along whatever I could find in my filing cabinets. As Robinson so well puts it, in the book that has now appeared, Murray was "a great listener; you came away from an encounter with Harry feeling full and satisfied at the top of your personal form." My own early contact with Harry in 1965 had been enriching and stimulating, and my notes are as full of ideas he aroused in me as of specific bits of historical information he passed on. I had every reason to think that he was deserving of a full-length biographical study.

Murray was primarily self-taught as a psychologist and reported that in college he had never taken a formal psychology course; he felt proud to be in the humanistic tradition of William James. Like James, Murray was trained as a physician, with a specialty in surgery. He not only had been in formal analysis with Jung, partly conducted while sailing on the lake in Zurich, but also had gone to the Freudian Franz Alexander, who helped train a number of the earliest Boston analysts. Harry was, however, too broad-minded and eclectic to put up with the tiresome antics that were associated with what he told me were local professional orthodox Freudian "crackpots."

And so Harry went on to build up his own Psychological Clinic at Harvard, which had originally been founded by Morton Prince.

PAUL ROAZEN, professor of political and social science at York University in Toronto, is the author of *Encountering Freud: The Politics and Histories of Psychoanalysis.*

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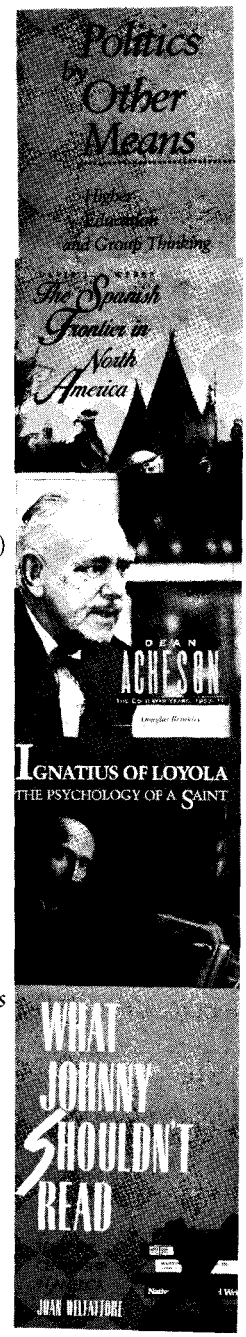

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He inspired a whole generation of graduate students. *A Study of Lives* (1963), edited by Robert W. White, was presented to Harry on his seventieth birthday "by students and colleagues past and present who will always remember with excitement and gratitude their sojourn in the high invigorating climate created by his infectious zest, wide-ranging awareness, bountiful powers of creation, and staunch fidelity to the increase of human understanding." *A Study of Lives* contains eighteen essays by such people as Nevitt Sanford, Kenneth Keniston, David C. McClelland, Leopold Bellak, Edwin Schneidman, M. Brewster Smith, Robert R. Holt, Silvan Tomkins, and Erik H. Erikson.

There never was any way of categorizing Harry through conventional academic pigeonholes. Starting in the 1920s he had been obsessed with studying the life and works of Herman Melville, at a time when the Melville literature was still scarce. Although in the end Harry failed to come through with a formal Melville biography, he did succeed, through a succession of influential essays, in helping to establish Melville's standing today. He was fascinated with Melville's family history and wrote an influential introduction to *Pierre.*

Harry also had early training, before turning to psychology, as a biochemist, and this left a permanent imprint on him in that he sought to put his theories of personality on a scientific foundation. The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) is perhaps the most famous device associated with his name, along with that of his collaborator Christiana Morgan. The TAT was a means of drawing forth from people words and stories as a way of inferring important aspects of personality that the individual could or would not volunteer. During World War II, Harry, who had been consistently worried about the rise of fascism in Europe, went to work for the military and helped the Office of Strategic Services devise some tests for selecting secret agents. His most famous single book, which was the outcome of collaborating with others at his Psychological Clinic, was *Explorations in Personality* (1938). He co-edited, with the anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn, the influential book of readings, *Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture* (1948).

Robinson's *Love's Story Told: A Life of Henry A. Murray* had the task of covering the story of a man born as long ago as 1893. Ninety-five years of life is hard to compress within the pages of any one book. Examining the notes to this text, it looks to me as if a great deal of the primary research was done in the early 1970s. Harry and his second wife, who still survives, cooperated in this project. The problem for his biographer, as I see it, is partly that Harry went on to live so long. He was recently widowed when I first met him, and he did not remarry until 1969. But almost twenty years of married life gets little attention in *Love's Story Told,* as if Robinson had written his book in the early 1970s and then put it aside pending Harry's death.

The result is, I regret to say, an unbalanced view, even if it is hard for me to criticize a book that has been in the works for twenty years and that duly acknowledges my help. Rumor had long ago reached me that, while he was married to his first wife, Harry had maintained an important extra-marital relationship. A 1988 article informed us that his lover was Christiana Morgan, and essentially *Love's Story Told* is an account of that particular liaison. As I now write objecting to how much Robinson makes of the significance of Christiana in Harry's life, I can hear him protesting against my own Freudian puritanism. Robinson argues that for more than forty years Christiana had been "at the center" of Harry's life, and Robinson even details sado-masochistic practices. But it does seem to me that, even though Harry's relationship to Christiana extended from the 1920s until her death in 1967, there is something unseemly about making so much about his tie to her.

Harry's first wife had died suddenly in 1962, and he made no effort then to marry the woman who had been his co-worker and mistress. She had long been drinking too much, and she died in circumstances that were at best accidental. They were on a holiday on St. John, Virgin Islands, she had drunk heavily, Harry got angry, fell asleep, and Christiana was found drowned in less than two feet of water. Harry seems to have felt guilt-ridden and suspected suicide. I have no doubt that he wanted the story of their relationship reported. Still, I do not think this book has done for Harry what he deserves. Reading it makes me want to recommend that, given how un-

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likely it is that any outsider is ever going to understand the most intimate parts of lives, the safest procedure is to destroy all old love letters, divorce documents, and so on, in order to allow the work itself to come forth.

This may seem an extreme suggestion, but let me illustrate some telling aspects of how *Love's Story Told* goes astray. Surely an important part of Harry's life has to do with the formation of the social relations department at Harvard. The reader is given some names, such as Talcott Parsons and Clyde Kluckhohn, but nothing much further gets said about them. What was distinctive about Parsons's contribution to modern sociology? Books have been written about his ideas, but one would not gather that from *Love's Story Told*. The social relations department has long since ceased to exist, but we are told nothing whatever about what might have happened. Readers are also entitled to know more than a spare page worth about Harry's participation as an expert witness in behalf of Alger Hiss at the trial that ended in his being convicted of perjury.

And Clyde Kluckhohn—why does he matter? One would never guess the fecundity of his contribution to anthropology and social science, or that his *Mirror For Man*, written for the general public, was in its time immensely influential. Robinson does not address the question of whether Kluckhohn's ideas were right or wrong, for it is as if he had no concepts to contribute. We are told on page 294 of *Love's Story Told*, in an explanation of the intimate friendship between Murray and Kluckhohn, that "Kluckhohn had his own carefully guarded secret life, which made him a sympathetic and trusted confidant." That's all the main text has to say about Kluckhohn's "secret," and I confess my mind did start whirling over stories I had once heard. The notes to *Love's Story Told* appear at the back of the book, and there is nothing to help explain the reference to the "secret" referred to on page 294. But on reading through all the notes, after finishing the book, I found a citation attached to page 230: "Kluckhohn's homosexuality was no secret to many in the Harvard community. He was truthful with Harry on this score and promised to respect his friend's very decided heterosexual orientation." The evidence here is an interview with Harry conducted by Robinson in 1985, which again makes me wonder exactly when the main text got constructed. But is this any way to compose a narrative, so that a reader coming across a "secret" on page 294 has to find the solution in a note to page 230 maintaining that there was "no secret"? I cite this example about Kluckhohn since it, in a nutshell, shows how askew the book itself is.

Now that I have stuck my neck out and said that this book, written with Harry's cooperation, has such an awkward air to it, I want to make certain that I am not being misunderstood. If one opens *Love's Story Told* knowing how truly remarkable and emancipated a man Harry was, then the exaggeration of the relationship between him and Christiana may not seem so important. But I fear that a generation that did not know him is going to be inadequately drawn by the book to pay enough attention to the ideas Harry had and to why as a teacher he was capable of inspiring so many serious graduate students.

True, the book is full of invaluable information that would be impossible to get anywhere else. For example, Robinson relies on a "carefully crafted autobiography" that Harry published as "The Case of Murr." Also, Harry's slight stammer is recognizable, and we learn about his Groton and Harvard rowing background. Dean Acheson was one of his roommates at Groton, and Robinson quotes him as having reported, in 1970, that Harry was the "outstanding" member of their class "in the sense of originality of mind, curiosity about everything, sympathetic personality, catholicity of taste, cultural breadth." I only wish that *Love's Story Told* communicated more of what Acheson had in mind, which also fits in with the man I, only slightly to be sure, knew.

Robinson does tell us how "one expanded in Harry's ample presence; one lifted gratefully toward his eminence. The patrician in him was never concealed, but it appeared in the midst of much else—intelligence, learning, discipline, generosity, creativity—that was more conventionally estimable." And we do get a report from a 1970 interview with Kenneth Keniston saying that his old teacher was "the most imaginative and creative person I've ever known."

But there is not enough in *Love's Story Told*, as far as I am concerned, to substantiate Keniston's judgment or any such claims of

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intellectual distinction that Robinson seems to take too much for granted. Robinson faithfully reports how Murray felt blocked and frustrated as a writer, not just in connection with the Melville project but in explaining his whole orientation toward human nature. But just how powerful Harry could be as a writer can be illustrated, I think, by an obituary of Freud he published in the *American Journal of Psychology* (1940). Murray referred to Freud as "the creator and dictator of psychoanalysis."

Hardly had the International Psychoanalytic Association been founded in 1910 than it began to break up into factions; and within a few years the heretics, Adler, Jung, Rank, Stekel, unable to accept "pansexualism" as a doctrine, were pursuing independent paths. But many followers were left and a host of others gained who knew better than, or not enough, to oppose a man who had staked his life on an idea.

Murray said he thought that Freud's book *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* "applied rather well to the state of affairs in the psychoanalytic society, as well as to the ideology of fascism." He wrote that "Freud knew that he had conquered . . ." and that "innocent of the dread of being wrong, he did not hesitate to publish the most far-fetched conceits of speculation." Murray believed that "if Freud had been more of a scientist he would have pressed no claims to be one. Dogmatism is anti-scientific, and there are reasons to distrust a truth that forms a sect." Such comments, written over half a century ago and bound to have gotten Harry in all sorts of trouble at the time, do not appear at all in *Love's Story Told.*

If Robinson's book is the first of other biographical studies of Murray, then it should be possible to correct what I find unbalanced about it. But I fear that the concentration on the illicit love for Christiana is going to blind future students to Harry's love for his two wives and daughter, as well as the students he helped to encourage. Robinson reports, for example, that more than six hundred people came to Harry's first wife's funeral, which I presume means she was no cipher. Harry was, Robinson tells us, fascinated by creativity, yet it is Harry's most creative side that is underemphasized in *Love's Story Told.*

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In my reading, the book seems too much an account of self-indulgence and rationalization. Some will think that the whole revolution in ideas that Freud and Jung participated in has sanctioned old-fashioned selfishness. It is true that the married Jung, too, who offered himself in many ways as a model to patients like Harry, had for many years another woman, Toni Wolff. Robinson quotes Lewis Mumford's review of Jung's autobiography, which faults the omission of any mention of Toni Wolff, and Robinson sees that as "symptomatic" in Jung of "the kind of self-absorption that Harry wished to avoid." Unknown to Mumford, and Robinson, there is a whole unpublished volume of Jung's autobiography, which the Jung family has not allowed out yet, which does explicitly describe Toni Wolff as well as others in Jung's life.

If Harry did, as Robinson thinks, believe that the relationship with Christiana was "a new religion," and that he and she "had been called as a couple to take a leading role in the history of the human spirit," then he was, as far as I can tell, sadly misguided. *Love's Story Told* reads to me like a tale of Harry having

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victimized Christiana, which, even if it were true, would be at odds with his behavior in his second marriage, which gets all-too-brief attention here. There is abundant material in *Love's Story Told* about the combat between Harry and the most scientistic psychologists at Harvard in his day, but those struggles take a backseat to Robinson's theme of the tie to Christiana. Yet Robinson tells us that a central principle of Harry's had been to turn from the abnormal to the normal, from failure to success.

Biography is a perilous business, and perhaps Robinson's work, to those who knew Harry better than I, will seem more successful. Melville may, under the circumstances, be an appropriate authority to cite in behalf of how only once Harry had died could a faithful narrative be constructed: "Biography, in its purer form, confined to the ended lives of the true and the brave, may be held the fairest meed of human virtue—one given and received in entire disinterestedness—since neither can the biographer hope for acknowledgement from the subject, nor the subject at all avail himself of the biographical distinction conferred."

Playing Ball

LENNY, LEFTY, AND THE CHANCELLOR: THE LEN BIAS TRAGEDY AND THE SEARCH FOR REFORM IN BIG-TIME COLLEGE BASKETBALL. *By C. Fraser Smith. Bancroft Press, Baltimore. $12.95.*

Reviewed by MORRIS FREEDMAN

In June of 1986, Len Bias, a superb basketball player at the University of Maryland, College Park, died from a cocaine overdose. He was celebrating being chosen second in the NBA draft, less than forty-eight hours earlier, by the Boston Celtics.

The instant—at times hysterical—nationwide reaction to his death starkly illuminated once again the landscape of corruption, confusion, and criminality in American college sports.

Few were surprised that Bias turned out to be a student in name only, like most of his teammates and many of their opponents; it is generally known that college coaches throughout the country recruit high school players with little regard to their academic achievements or potential and run their teams essentially free of any control from academic authorities. Some Maryland professors were astonished to learn how much influence, both academically and athletically, alumni, businessmen, and state politicians wielded over internal campus matters.

C. Fraser Smith's *Lenny, Lefty, and the Chancellor* reports the circumstances of the Bias affair in much of its complicated, tangled surface. So crowded and turbulent is the stage Smith describes that one can be diverted from the essential drama to look, in vain, for causes and shadings in the details of buffoonery, slapstick, hypocrisy, racial sensitivities, incompetence, and entrepreneurial and academic maneuvering. Bias and the University of Maryland Chancellor, John Slaughter, were black; the basketball coach Charles G. "Lefty" Driesell enjoyed playing the shrewd, semi-literate redneck ("If you ever didn't do something like I didn't, get Edward Bennett Williams for a lawyer"); the university seemed to be run simultaneously by the regents, state politicians, a president, a chancellor, the athletic director, coaches, and "boosters." In one bizarre episode Chancellor Slaughter accounts for his actions in a closed meeting attended by car and furniture dealers and miscellaneous state officials—some currently in office and others who had been. Some of them were alumni; all were members of the Terrapin Club, the formal campus name for the "boosters," a subculture that may be found on many campuses and whose principal function is to provide funds, in whatever ways thought necessary, to encourage highly visible athletic programs for male undergraduates. Smith's indefatigable, often understandably frenetic amassing of facts and statistics adds up to a trove of raw data for some future, cooler sociological or anthropological sifting.

Whatever the roles played locally by Bias, the doomed young hero, Driesell, the older,

✪ MORRIS FREEDMAN is professor emeritus of English at the University of Maryland. His work has appeared in *Commentary, The New Yorker, Harper's,* and other magazines.

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tireless manipulator, and Slaughter, the remote, troubled, naive, and bumbling minor deus ex machina, the importance of the events in which they were enmeshed ultimately has to do with American higher education on a larger geographical and chronological stage. The Bias case marked a localized eruption of a widespread growth that has periodically been diagnosed and ignored.

Several decades ago, Robert Maynard Hutchins, then president of the University of Chicago, in rejecting big-time sports for his school, suggested that if universities wanted maximum returns from expensively generated athletic events, they might race horses and outfit the jockeys in the school's colors. Chicago, like other major institutions, built its reputation professionally, on authentic faculty distinction and the achievements of its graduates in respectable disciplines, not on sheer, indiscriminate publicity. Some universities, of course, followed the pattern of the one depicted in Elliott Nugent and James Thurber's *The Male Animal*, gaining recognition from winning teams, a hyperactive undergraduate social life ("animal houses"), the ridiculing of serious class work, and, after World War II, the garnering of increasingly huge government and industry grants for engineering and science research. American higher education cleaved at one extreme into a branch of the entertainment business, primarily concerned with image, at the other into a smaller, beleaguered, bedraggled bastion valiantly determined to survive in an often crabbed, single-minded pursuit of ancient values and verities of scholarship, learning, and teaching. The tensions between these opposing cultures would be evident almost exclusively to those resident in either.

In spite of excesses over the decades, like guarantees to coaches of annual six-figure sums, extravagances alone have not inevitably been pernicious. But hypocrisy has. U.S. District Judge Miles W. Lord once ruled that an athlete could not be excluded from a team simply because he failed courses. "The plaintiff," he ruled, "was recruited to come to the University of Minnesota to be a basketball player and not a scholar. His academic record reflects that he has lived up to those expectations."

Worthy schools have retained their academic integrity—some more, some less—along with outstanding records in sports. Schools that drop or scant athletics do not at once gain, or regain, academic worth. The University of Minnesota, like Maryland and other schools of similar size and resources, can, with enough will, find enough bona fide students to shoot baskets and score touchdowns.

We are conditioned to linking athletic superiority with intellectual inferiority, and we therefore tend to ignore or distort the evidence offered by the careers of such men as Byron White, Bill Bradley, and Jack Kemp. Those attacking athletics at Maryland's College Park campus automatically cite Lenny Bias but rarely Lennie Elmore, also a black athlete, who, after his own prominent basketball career there, went on to get a degree from Harvard Law School. Obviously, Biases are more numerous, but Elmores do exist, and more might.

Blaming ineptly or venally run athletic programs has become as easy a way for administrators to account for failure in the larger

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academic effort as blaming inadequate funding. Too many administrators reduce managing a campus to raising money or arranging for winning teams. Either is easier than making informed, prudent, tough decisions on critical academic issues. Like many of his peers, President John "Call me Johnny" Toll of the University of Maryland system, Chancellor Slaughter's superior, encouraged the push toward a virtually indiscriminate primacy. Few academic leaders these days abandon, even briefly, the pressure to be preeminent in some way, to concentrate on the intellectual character of their schools. Newly installed President Neil Rudenstine of Harvard startled the academic community by calling a halt to fundraising while the university pondered what it could productively do with still more money.

The University of Maryland began patiently rebuilding its academic program after World War II, working with available resources. The nationwide campus upheavals of the late 1960s fouled things up, however, and eventually provoked an enormous statewide restructuring of the entire university system. College Park was designated the flagship, and administrators were elaborately renamed—none as "admiral," alas, but "chancellor" and "provost" in profusion. The state began to lavish funds on "higher education." At College Park, this meant, among the more visible results, marvelous new landscaping and buildings, a luxurious expansion of the football stadium, the hiring of high-powered coaches and athletic directors, the proliferation of managers, an elaborate state-of-the-art intramural telephone network, and the luring of professorial jet-setters. Freshly installed potentates lost little time boasting that Maryland was at last fulfilling its destiny as a "top ten" institution. Genuine academic improvement did continue, doggedly if somewhat surreptitiously.

Chancellor Slaughter, whom President Toll had picked to head College Park's ascension, seemed an urbane man. An engineer, a former head of the National Science Foundation, neatly bearded (at least, according to Smith, until he sought a new identity after Bias's death, when he cut back to a neat moustache), a pipe smoker, he liked to distinguish between "education," which he favored, and mere "training." He also happened to be a jock "sniffer," to use the common if inelegant designation, missing few basketball games, sitting on the floor with the coaches and players, and exhibiting clear awe of Coach Lefty and his stars. Although Slaughter also seemed to understand traditional protocol, not to mention the normal procedures of the campus, he appointed on his own, without consulting anyone in relevant authority, the successor to Driesell, Bob Wade, a black high school coach from Baltimore. After three muddled years, Wade was pressed to resign. (During one stage, the university had three basketball coaches on full-time salary—Driesell, Wade, and Gary Williams, Wade's replacement and current coach. Driesell and Wade got golden parachutes in the form of long continuations on payroll after they gave up their duties. Driesell's parachute was much larger, thanks to his attorney, Edward Bennett Williams. Coaches Wade and Williams early faced their own charges of impropriety from the National Collegiate Athletic Association.)

If any quietly impressive good guy may be glimpsed in Smith's account of the swirling chaos in the aftermath of Lenny Bias's death, it might be J. Robert Dorfman, who headed a task force to consider its academic and other implications and was for a period academic vice president of the university and sole provost. (So dizzying has the revolving door for administrators at College Park been in the last few years, even persons closely concerned with campus business often got the cast of characters confused. Smith, for instance, labels Dorfman, in different places in his book, "Dean of Physics" and "Dean of Students," neither of which he ever was or could have been since neither title exists.)

Dorfman's committee recommended enforcing academic requirements for athletes, certainly not a novel, let alone a revolutionary, proposition but notably courageous in the context. One regent declared that the school, as Smith puts it, "handicapped its coaches with the new academic standards." The state senate president almost plaintively asked the new university head if he couldn't on his own admit players rejected as students, as high executives at other schools did. A former governor of the state, a booster, wondered whether athletes needed any traditional academic courses at all, and Lefty remarked that men like Lenny Bias, who could earn millions of dollars, hardly needed degrees.

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At the same time, solipsistic professorial extremists urged the dropping of all intercollegiate sports, as though no one had ever thought of this brilliant notion before or had ever worked out a respectable rationale for them. One mathematics professor called for the abolition of the NCAA, arguing that if the world can do without a USSR, the country can do without an NCAA. No one any longer mentions the classical ideal of *mens sana in corpore sano*. No one proposes assimilating sports and associated activities, such as marching bands and cheering squads, into the general Mardi Gras mockery and fun of undergraduate life, as some great schools have comfortably done.

Smith's account of "the search for reform in big-time college basketball," his book's subtitle, reports efforts ranging from the naive to the byzantine. Most of these reveal little understanding of the history of college basketball, thus dooming even the most well-meaning participants in reformation, according to the now-familiar formulation, to repeating past errors.

Certainly an assortment of winning teams at Eton, Harrow, Oxford, Cambridge, Stanford, Princeton, Duke, and men's lacrosse and women's basketball at Maryland itself, are as intimately mingled with our sense of those institutions as their more famous professors and graduates. It seems not to have occurred to Terrapin Club boosters that they might endow, with all appertaining hoopla, fellowships and professorships for significant scholarly and creative achievement, with as much ultimate profit to themselves as their impassioned support of men's football and basketball triumphs. No one can charge philanthropists who have enriched academic endowments at Yale, Harvard, and Chicago with getting no return for their generosity.

Among other things that Smith's book demonstrates is that neither jocks and their followers nor eggheads have a full sense of what universities have been and can still be. Sports programs can indeed act like killer vines that entwine themselves about the trunks of great trees, ultimately destroying them. They can also behave like the separate trunks of the vast banyan tree that mature into reciprocally supporting entities.

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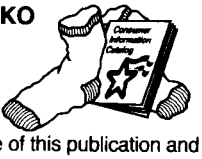

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The Reader Replies

Writing Historical Fiction

As the author of a historical novel set in seventeenth-century Connecticut, I thoroughly enjoyed Thomas Mallon's article, "Writing Historical Fiction," in the Autumn 1992 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

But I wonder if Mr. Mallon would venture a definition of a historical novel? Is it simply a novel set before the contemporary age? If so, by how many years? I graduated high school in 1962, the year in which Mr. Mallon set his historical novel, *Aurora 7*. I am about to attend my thirtieth high school reunion, but I have difficulty thinking of myself and my former classmates as historical personages. It seems to me that *any* work of historical fiction not set in the future or immediate present must, as Mr. Mallon says, "*re*construct [emphasis mine] the surface texture" of a world. Does that make them historical novels? Is *Rabbit, Run* a historical novel? What about *Rabbit at Rest*?

CLAUDE CLAYTON SMITH
Department of English
Ohio Northern University
Ada, Ohio

THOMAS MALLON replies: All rules and definitions having to do with novels are slippery, and I'm not sure anyone has been able precisely to distinguish historical novels from the rest of them. The critic Avrom Fleishman has, however, listed a number of typical assumptions about them: historical novels, he says, are usually thought to be set at least two generations, forty to sixty years, in the past, and their plots will "include a number of 'historical' events, particularly those in the public sphere (war, politics, economic change, etc.), mingled with and affecting the personal fortunes of the characters."

I think this formulation has some merit, even though it would exclude *Aurora 7*, which I began only twenty-five years after May 24, 1962. That volume may belong to another category Fleishman mentions: "novels of the recent past." (The phrase is Kathleen Tillotson's in *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties*.) Perhaps, though, history's increasing speed as well as our increasing historical obliviousness call for a reduction in the forty-to-sixty-year reverse statute of limitations. Consider, too, that I lived through 1962 as a ten-year-old boy. Since I'd only known it through the distorting magnifications of childhood vision, the year seemed, during my later attempt to *think about* it (something different from merely remembering), more distant in time than it was. What's fundamentally required is remoteness from the era, and a number of useful definitions could probably be built upon that criterion. (I wouldn't call any of the *Rabbit* books historical novels, since Updike wrote all of them within a few years of when they are set.)

Psychiatric Misadventures

In "Psychiatric Misadventures," in the Autumn 1992 AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Paul R. McHugh admirably and refreshingly refuses to fall prey to a common symptom of psychiatric conceit—the belief that psychiatrists as such are privy to special knowledge of human nature and, indeed, of literature, history, politics, and anything else they can think of. It is therefore all the more unfortunate that he succumbs to a second strain of psychiatric hubris disorder—the devaluation of the autonomy and freedom of those deemed to be mentally ill, with the opinion of the psychiatrist on how the patient should live to be substituted (as it is nowhere else in medicine) for that of the patient himself.

Dr. McHugh first, as many psychiatrists before him have done, offers a misleading version of the ideas of Thomas Szasz as an example of the folly of the anti-psychiatry movement. McHugh's answer to Szasz's statement that psychiatry creates schizophrenia is that schizophrenics in actuality experience certain symptoms, such as delusions and disrupted thinking, and need hospital care. But Szasz does not (and of course could not) deny that the experiences and behaviors psychiatrists call mentally ill actually take place. He has something a bit more subtle in mind. His real argument is that psychiatry affixes the "ill" label to such experiences and behaviors and thereby imputes to those possessing them certain qualities which do not (I would add the word "necessarily" here; Szasz would not) follow from those experiences and behaviors alone. Thus, because they are deemed to be

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ill, the mentally disturbed are thought to deviate from some objective standard of mental "health," to "need" treatment (as McHugh argues), to come within the jurisdiction of the medical profession, to be incapable of making decisions about their own lives, and to be properly subject to involuntary hospital confinement and medical treatment.

It is with the last of these that Szasz most vehemently takes issue. Szasz himself does not appear to object to people making informed and voluntary decisions to seek psychiatric treatment. What he fiercely opposes is the notion that a person's bizarre or incomprehensible behavior (so long as it is not criminal), because it is defined by psychiatry as sick, should make him subject to involuntary confinement or treatment. It is by no means obvious that those exhibiting such behaviors should not be allowed to live their lives as they (rather than their psychiatrists) see fit or on what principled basis they are distinguishable from others who are irrational (e.g., the deeply religious), dangerous (e.g., the street gang member who has yet to commit the crime he undoubtedly will), disturbing (e.g., the extremely nasty), or self-destructive (e.g., those who obviously drink, eat, or smoke too much), but whose behavior we would not consider attempting to alter forcibly.

McHugh drags out the oft-repeated argument that, far from being a deprivation of freedom, hospital confinement actually frees the patient, by removing his illness, which is the real impediment to his freedom. The argument can be made that locking a severely disturbed person up and treating him against his will until he thinks and acts in a manner more consistent with what is good for society, and with what society thinks is good for him, is a worthwhile trade-off of individual freedom for the common good. However, an Orwellian corruption of the word "freedom" to the point where it is said to be not only not the exact opposite of involuntary confinement but in fact *fostered by* such confinement both obscures the real issues involved and is unworthy of someone as obviously thoughtful and concerned as Dr. McHugh.

Psychiatric disregard for freedom and autonomy appears again in McHugh's discussion of sex-change operations. The people involved want them. McHugh proposes to deny this wish on the grounds of his own distaste for the procedure and his apparent belief that such people do not know what is good for them. That McHugh, or most psychiatrists, or most people, think sex-change operations are bad and that those who want them may do so for reasons that seem to us to be unrealistic or ill-considered, cannot in themselves be adequate justifications for refusing to allow the operations. We let people do countless things widely acknowledged to be harmful or even fatal to them, merely because they want to and we agree that they have the right to live their lives as they see fit. Smoking cigarettes, not exercising, and refusing medical treatment are good examples. McHugh does not tell us in what relevant respect these differ from sex-change operations.

I also find most curious McHugh's silence on the question of whether people are happier after having the operations. I believe there is evidence that they often are. We let people slowly, or even not so slowly, kill themselves by mistreating their bodies. Even if we grant that sex-change operations mistreat the body, should we not, a fortiori, allow people to make themselves happier by doing so?

Having said all this, I would like to conclude by strongly commending Dr. McHugh for his much-needed and brave stand against therapists, in pursuance of one or another ill-conceived and unsupported theory, convincing their patients to "remember," and blame their current difficulties on, episodes of childhood sexual abuse which never took place. Without minimizing the heinousness of such abuse when it does occur, one can be thankful for McHugh's strongly reasoned and strongly stated indictment of its fabrication, abetted by overeager and underqualified therapists. That he is willing to speak out in the face of today's fashions of abuse hysteria and over-psychoanalyzing is particularly heartening.

AARON S. GREENBERG
Evanston, Illinois

Psychiatry tells us that how we go about interpreting and making sense of the past obviously affects how we define our present and anticipate the future. And so it is puzzling that Professor McHugh, a distinguished member of that profession, would in the Autumn 1992 AMERICAN SCHOLAR resort to such a narrow and simplistic explanation of what he considers psychiatry's benign role in the frenzied, wholesale emptying of mental hospitals in the past decades. To be sure, he refers to this as a "psychiatric misadventure"; still, this "misadventure" has little to do with the accountability of this medical specialty. Professor McHugh says in his article that "medical errors of oversimplification and misplaced emphasis usually play themselves out for all to see." Somehow he neglects to recognize that *historical* errors of the same type arrive at the same ends. Narrow (even defensive) categorical arguments (or diagnoses), defended by a casual anecdote are interesting but not credible.

My experience in the mental health field, also as an educator, practitioner, and researcher, corresponds with his chronology—particularly with deinstitutionalization or what he calls "the precipitate dismissal of patients with severe, chronic mental disorders. . . ." I am in full agreement that this movement was not only a misdirection but a calamitous, costly, and inhuman blunder.

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Beyond that consensus, however, I find Professor McHugh's explanations of this "misadventure" facile and self-serving. He implies that well-meaning and effective psychiatry was betrayed and led astray by the "collaborators in this sad enterprise." These "collaborators" (he lists Thomas Szasz, R. D. Laing, Erving Goffman, and Michel Foucault) were, in fact, equally well-meaning thinkers and critics who represent diverse if not conflicting perspectives on the social, cultural, historical, ethical as well as medical dimensions of mental illness. To be fair, these writers were indeed stern critics of medical psychiatry; this did not necessarily mean that they advocated indiscriminate discharge of mental patients. Their varied concerns were about the stigma of the psychiatric label, the social implications of mental illness, the ethics of medical control, and other conditions that may proceed when one falls into the mental health net. Should this noisy and argumentative crowd be lumped under the transparent label "Anti-psychiatrists"? Professor McHugh acknowledges that "psychiatry is a rudimentary art." If so, then the practitioners of this art should be reading and debating with critics and commentators whose careers are devoted to the study and analysis of this art. Included, of course, are the "anti-psychiatrists" as varied and respectable as those listed by Professor McHugh.

Professor McHugh's ingenuous explanation evoked a flood of my own anecdotes—memories of the horrors of the dehumanizing and indifferent practices of the psychiatric institution. In my practice with disturbed clients and in my teaching of students about to enter the mental health professions, my expressed theme was plain: Do whatever you can do (ethically and professionally) to keep people out of mental hospitals—otherwise they are lost souls. I was not referring to the "snakepits" or human warehouses run by, at best, uncaring or, at worst, sadistic wardens. My fears were with many institutions, public and private, that claimed to be "progressive," even teaching hospitals that in appearance were attractive and usually well staffed. As well-meaning as these centers were, becoming a patient under medical aegis often meant suffering the risk of losing personhood and self-esteem. In other medical specialties, the patient *has* a particular illness (he *has* Parkinsons or emphysema), while in psychiatry one *is* the illness (she *is* schizophrenic or depressed). One may suffer the debilitating effects of Parkinson's disease but is not denied respect and dignity; this is not the case when one is judged to be a schizophrenic, for example. For these unfortunates, the hospital was accepted as a perpetual refuge: the proverbial "swinging door" encouraged repeated readmissions, a phenomenon particularly peculiar among the medical specialties to psychiatry. And so, it was not merely the "fashionable opinion" that Professor McHugh so readily dismisses that attracted criticism of psychiatry and its tendency to reduce humanity to medical categories of symptoms, pathologies, and deficits. A huge literature (not merely the works of the annoying "anti-psychiatrists") was created by reputable scholars, journalists, and critics from many fields. Lasting fields of study in social deviancy, in medical anthropology, for example, were also launched. Their impetus was outrage, despair about the plight of the mentally ill.

My reconstruction of the past allows me painful familiarity with that plight. I, too, can offer a litany of anecdotes that capture the horrors of what passed as medical, psychiatric care: patients subjected to the indignity of the open staffing; those shuffling souls, routinely overmedicated; treatment consisting only of a few minutes of "supervision" of medication; patients harshly treated as "uncooperative" because they questioned the physicians; indifference to the patient's culture—ad nauseam.

Again, I share Professor McHugh's conviction that wholesale deinstitutionalization was a grave "misadventure." Living in California at the time, I helplessly watched not only the purging of state hospitals but the demolition of excellent after-care programs that had good records of easing and reinforcing patients' return to family and community.

Could it have been otherwise? Professor McHugh speaks of the past threat to psychiatry of the "thralldom to the gusty winds of fashion." Without in any way diminishing the contributions of epidemiology, genetics, and neuropharmacology to medical science noted by Professor McHugh, would it have made a difference if psychiatry had rejected the other extreme, its "thralldom" to an indifferent science? Whether the field of mental health could have resisted the winds of political expediency, I have some doubts. However, if psychiatry had truly listened to its critics, it might have come to listen to its patients. It might have understood that, whatever was known, say, about the neurophysiology of mind and behavior, this technical knowledge was meaningless if not somehow tied to all that makes the *person*—the intricate web of culture, relationships, context, intention, hope, and strength. With that kind of humility, perhaps another "psychiatric misadventure" might have been anticipated and avoided.

HOWARD GOLDSTEIN
Professor Emeritus
Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences
Case Western Reserve University

In his "Psychiatric Misadventures," psychiatrist Paul R. McHugh makes appealing but simplistic statements regarding deinstitutionalization (emptying the state mental hospitals), sex-change surgery for transsexuals, and multiple personality disorder

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(MPD). If deinstitutionalization has thrown many patients into the fire, shouldn't it at least be mentioned that some institutions had been frying pans? If sex-change surgery has been inappropriate in certain cases, does that mean that all equally qualified experts agree with Dr. McHugh that it has been inappropriate in all cases? And if pseudomemories of child abuse have occurred in mishandled cases, does that discredit all cases of MPD?

I particularly liked Dr. McHugh's anecdote about the medical student who wanted to liberate schizophrenics from psychiatric oppression until he interviewed an actual patient with schizophrenia and saw that the patient had a serious disorder requiring treatment. I'd like to introduce Dr. McHugh to actual patients with MPD so he could learn his own lesson. Does Dr. McHugh think that the authors of the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual (which includes MPD) are less discerning and experienced than he is?

For a better example of psychiatric misadventure, let me point to the vast research on "schizophrenia." All psychiatrists know that this is a group of disorders, not one disorder, yet decade after decade scarce resources continue to be poured down the drain studying this heterogeneous group of disorders as though it were one disorder. Is it any wonder that most research on "schizophrenia" has been inconclusive?

I hope I have conveyed to readers that the issues raised by Dr. McHugh are not as simple as he presented them. Indeed, I agree with Dr. McHugh that the public should be suspicious of psychiatrists who venture outside their clinics and make sweeping statements.

KENNETH A. NAKDIMEN, M.D.
New York, New York

PAUL R. MCHUGH replies: I thank Mr. Greenberg for his kind thoughts. I'm sorry he thinks that *any* of my opinions derive from hubris. Why not assume that my views, even if wrong, derived from study of all the proposals I've heard about mental disorders? That assumption would prompt him to provide me with new facts on schizophrenia rather than the old, shopworn arguments. If he has any research-based information, be assured I should be pleased to learn it.

The problem with Dr. Szasz and his kindred is that they oversimplified schizophrenia. Mr. Greenberg writes that the "bizarre and incomprehensible behavior" of patients afflicted with this condition is but a matter of "how they live their lives." He presumes that they are indistinguishable from others who act irrationally and imprudently. But they *are* distinguishable.

Patients with schizophrenia have a disease of the brain. Their mental features represent the symptoms of that disease. It impairs their capacity to understand, learn, and manage themselves in a mean world. They improve remarkably with medications combined with rehabilitative psychotherapy.

Thus it is not social bias that produces psychiatric recommendations but concern for those with damaged brains who are disturbed in thoughts and behaviors. Obviously Mr. Greenberg would not think that doctors are displaying contempt for human diversity when they prevent epileptic patients from swimming or driving automobiles until their seizures come under control. He has either failed to follow the accumulating evidence that schizophrenia is a brain disease or chosen to ignore it. These matters in informed circles are closed.

Forget Dr. Szasz. Almost everyone else has. I used him only because he provided plenty of material. Think of him as the Andy Warhol of American Psychiatry—the high priest of psychiatric camp—who, with a mischievous spirit of fun and self-promotion, oversimplified many a clinical issue and took advantage of the lack of experience people have in judging psychiatric data. His statement about schizophrenia and slavery, that I quoted in my essay, probably was facetious. He was aiming to make a splash not a point. No one, and that includes me, should take him too seriously.

Similarly with the sex-change operation, shelve it. I know and need no catechizing that our society, in its wisdom, permits people to do to themselves "countless things widely acknowledged to be harmful or even fatal to them." My message is that psychiatrists and surgeons should not carry out such things for them. Doctors are supposed to curb disorder, not serve it. Again I think this is all quite obvious even though it gets buried periodically by the wake from passings of the good ship "Follow-Your-Bliss." As far as I can tell the surgical approach to a mental disorder here, as in other efforts at correcting with a knife that which is found in the mind, has done little to improve the overall happiness in our world. It has often greatly increased the specific unhappiness of patients and their families.

I do not know how to proceed in a conversation with Professor Goldstein. He seems to agree with me and belabor me at the same time. He and I want to see psychiatry progress in the care of patients, and both of us have witnessed occasions when the discipline failed itself. But my essay had a simpler purpose than cataloguing all those failures.

I wished to depict how mistakes by psychiatrists (mistakes that are standard kinds of medical errors occurring in every medical discipline) were sometimes entangled and amplified by a prevailing fashion that temporarily swept everyone along on a "misadventure." I'm hardly excusing us psychiatrists or considering our role to be "benign." We, I am saying, both made and often sustained the mis-

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takes originally. There is, however, plenty of blame to go around and some should be given to the purveyors of fashionable thought who invaded the psychiatric clinic and encouraged the excesses.

My only suggestion to Professor Goldstein is that he read my essay again. We can then discuss the points that are in it and put aside for another time the messages he would like to hear.

I recommend that Dr. Nakdimen also read my essay more carefully. Deinstitutionalization had many champions—including those who, like Dr. Nakdimen, saw that some state hospitals were crowded and had deteriorated. However, my point addressed the conceptual error of oversimplifying the mental impairments of schizophrenic patients—seeing them not as suffering from disease but from oppression. This encouraged abrupt discharges and led to the gross unreadiness of community services which were promptly overwhelmed by more seriously disabled patients than they expected.

Dr. Nakdimen's comments on wasteful research in schizophrenia indicate that he also is not watching the current literature on brain imaging, psychopharmacology, genetics, and psychology. These reports not only give evidence that schizophrenia is a brain disease but more specifically that some of its cardinal symptoms—hallucinations and thought disorder—rest upon strategically localized damage to the left superior temporal gyrus. If he studied this encouraging work, I think he would agree that "resources"—both NIMH extramural grant monies and NIMH intramural commitments—far from being "poured down the drain" on schizophrenia research have been employed most wisely and to good effect enhancing our understanding of this condition and advancing us towards its rational treatment and prevention.

Let's ignore Dr. Nakdimen's sarcasm. On reflection, I'm sure he will see that it was gratuitous and unlike him at his best.

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